



TO BECOME OR NOT TO BECOME  
(THAT IS THE QUESTION!)

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(THAT IS THE QUESTION!)

EPISODES IN THE HISTORY OF  
AN INDIAN WORD

BY

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TO  
MY FELLOW-TRANSLATORS

## A FOREWORD

THE sub-title of my book indicates that it seeks to help the student of what we now call Indo-Aryan. Its main title shows that I would serve the general educated reader. He, if he be truly general, will at times graze in the field of religious documents, where he will, as general reader, be at the mercy of the translator. And the knowledge he derives from those documents will be shaped by what this agent has seen in their language—or has failed to see—and converted into his own. The language, original or substituted, will not be his main object; this will be to learn what the writings contain that once was new, was true, or was held to be beneficial to the spiritual health of men in a certain place and time. Men then and there were being stirred by certain ideas, and were, in the person of certain teachers, expressing these in a certain idiom. The translator, differing profoundly in time and perhaps in place, is being otherwise stirred, and has in consequence a very different idiom. Because of this, his task as interpreter is often one of great difficulty. He may be tempted to give the reader at all costs renderings that are 'good literature' when, it may be, he should, as a faithful servant of the true, not shrink from turning terms of an ancient, an exotic, an obsolete idiom into phases unfamiliar, and it may be clumsy to the literary taste of his own world, his own day. As Dr. Martin Buber has said: "To get an equivalent translation, one must even lay hold of phrases become

obsolete, nor fear to coin new forms. . . .” So far as he yields to that temptation he becomes for the general reader not only, as Italy has it, *traduttore*, but *traditore*—traitor as well as translator. In other words, where he should have used unfamiliar, perhaps unliterary phraseology, he sees the ancient idiom through his own modern spectacles, and the reader is not shown what those old writers were trying to say.

Now this disloyalty or this myopia in the translator over a certain word-plant, at one time being used in ancient India to express a ferment of utmost importance in religious growth, the word-plant from the stem *Bhū*, has been for me a growing trouble. In these pages I have uttered, mainly for the general reader, my lament. Lament because at this time of day he has at hand translations, often by more than one hand, of all those Indian documents wherein that disloyalty, that myopia has been, now more, now less indulged in. So that I cry out when the play is over and the harm done. My book can at the best only point to pitfalls; it cannot now prevent their being made.

If the matter were one of antiquarian interest only, the harm done would matter little. But that ancient religious ferment about the idea seeking expression in that word-plant is of sempiternal importance in the religious life of man. And it is this that has led me to write. Dear general reader! Are you grazing in the pastures of translations of early Upanishads and Buddhist Suttas? Well, your food will as a rule be in good literary English (or German; very little of it as yet in French, Italian, or other tongues). But that which these works are persistently trying to tell you is that the very man, soul, self is in process of becoming,

of coming to be as he has not been before. Yet you might find, if you could compare with the originals, that very often the words for 'become' are in this way and that evaded, played with, weakened, so that you cannot see what India was then trying to say. Nor are you able to follow the difficult irregularities and inconsistencies in that trying to say. You are not led by the hand to see how India fell away in that holy ferment: how the dynamic urge in man's nature relapsed into an ecclesiastical maintaining of the static ideal, whereby the divine malaise of 'becoming' was paralyzed; how the growing monastic vogue in seeing life as 'ill,' not as the necessary means in becoming, here and in other worlds, affected the value in and use of the words for 'becoming'; how the Buddhist gospel under that monkish mortmain became a teaching on-all-fours of 'good': good monk and good layman here below within present vision, losing sight of man's potency to become in the long run something transcending that, even the realization of his potential Godhead.

All this you could better follow if the translations had been everywhere, as they are actually only occasionally, loyal in rendering 'become'-words as such. This grievous defaulting my little book cannot make good. But it may serve you as a condiment in your grazing. Especially if it help you to knit up with that ancient quest of India your own religious outlook and walk as son of the morning wayfaring ever in a More toward a Most:

Look! what the soul holds dear imagine it  
To lie that way thou goest, not whence thou comest.



# CONTENTS

	PAGE
A FOREWORD - - - - -	vii
 <small>CHAPTER</small>	
I. GRAMMARIAN, TRANSLATOR AND READER -	1
II. ' IS ' AND ' BECOMES ' - - - - -	13
III. MAN AND HIS BECOMING IN THE UPANISHADS -	28
IV. THE NOUN BHAVA: BECOMING AND ITS IMPLICA- TIONS - - - - -	51
V. THE VERB BHŪ IN MOODS OF THE PRESENT -	71
VI. THE VERB <sup>o</sup> IN THE FUTURE TENSE - -	87
VII. THE VERB BHŪ AND THE PAST - - -	113
VIII. BECOMING IN PROSPECT: BHAVYA (BHABBA) -	127
IX. THE VERB BHŪ AS MAKING-BECOME - -	137
X. THE BHŪ-STEM WITH PREFIXES - - -	154
XI. WORDS AT PARTING - - - - -	160
INDEX - - - - -	163

# TO BECOME OR NOT TO BECOME (THAT IS THE QUESTION!)

## CHAPTER I

### GRAMMARIAN, TRANSLATOR AND READER

THE science of language, the history of language should be one of the most human of studies. By this I mean that it should refer us at every turn to the man who in speech is seeking to express what he deems he is, and to reveal what he knows he is wishing to be, to become, to do. In speech we have the legacy not merely, not so much, of things attempted, things done or not done, as of the willer who reached out, the seeker who found or found not, the maker who tried and perhaps achieved.

Yet grammarians and philologists seem of all men to be most blind to this essential aspect of their study. I have opened many grammars both elementary and advanced, and found no semblance of interest evinced in that which alone lends reality, lends living interest to the subject: the man worthing—*i.e.*, taking stock of his own experience as such. The interest in him is swallowed up in a multitude of inflections, set down as just found, often or rarely, earlier or later. Analysis has us all in thrall, and we are intent on fractions of experience as such, heedless of the experiencer.

This is to hint at what is at present an impracticable change of attitude. Yet how relatively interesting, as documents, would our grammars and philological

studies become with that changed attitude! Were I to say here, this little book deals with the inflections, frequent or rare, earlier or later, of an Indian word-stem, the general reader would at once conclude that the book may be in place in the classroom or on reference-shelves, but that it can have, beyond such utility, no living interest for him. Translators, he may say, let themselves in for dealing with such subjects, but save in a footnote here and there they will not ask of him to be interested in their special difficulties. They read the results of his deliberations, form their opinion on those results, and beyond this are not curious.

Readers have now more opportunity than ever before to enter on worlds of other literatures through the translator. And it is in the negative effect on translators made by our 'man'-less grammars that I see the mischief wrought through over-specialization in analysis. They have met with no inspiring lead to ask themselves whether, in the tongue they transform, a man was looking at his own experience in the same way as a man in their own tongue was looking. Hence they take ever too much liberty in their renderings. They fail to let us see, in the man whose words they reproduce, one who, while he shares a common manhood with them, has been evolving under very different skies in different times.

Let me give an instance, where at first sight my stricture will seem sheer unreasonableness. The founder of Buddhism is in a Sutta shown saying this to a missionary, Puṇṇa: "But if they ill-treat you, *te kin-ti bhavissati?*" The four Pali words are literally: 'for-you what (now) will-(there)-be (or become)?' That is to say: 'What in you will be the result?'

Here the English translator<sup>1</sup> has: 'What would you think?' The missionary makes reply, and to five other such questions winds up each time with 'thus will (it) be, (yea) thus will (it) be (or become),' the translator rendering this affirmation by 'That is what I should think; that would be my thought.'<sup>2</sup>

Now I am not saying that, were there as yet other translators of this Sutta, their translation would here be identical with this. But I am saying that we have on the one hand an Englishman seeing the missionary's answer in terms of 'what he thinks' about a given situation, on the other we have in the original a probable contingency viewed as something new come into an Indian missionary's life: in other words, a becoming of what was not before. I say not that the one reply is as plausible as the other; I do say that the outlook as given by the Pali is not that given by the English. In the Pali we have the outlook of a man of India at some time prior to our era (if the talk is a genuine survival of words spoken, not in Pali but in a Prakrit dialect, by two historical characters; the time will have been the sixth century B.C., but the Pali idiom may be a later version of, say, the third century B.C.). And for those two historical characters, Gotama and his missionary comrade Puṇṇa, the religion which they were teaching was most intensely and absorbingly a gospel of how man, taught in their day as being, not a poor transitory creature, but a very effluent of Godhead, might, in and by his life, become more and more That Who he potentially was. And hence the one thing needful for each was how to

<sup>1</sup> Lord Chalmers in *Further Dialogues of the Buddha*, ii. (S. Bks. Buddhists, vi.).

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 307 f.

forward the spiritual growth which they called 'becoming.' The man to be taught is here for the moment put on one side; what effect would the mission's hardships have on the missionary's growth? This was much more present to both, as the context shows, than what, in weighing the situation, they "thought" about it in general.

Now if grammarian and philologist had dealt thus with the verb *bhū*, 'to become,' instead of just calling it in passing 'to be,'<sup>1</sup> it is possible that the translator might have been more awake, more discerning.

Nor is the earlier translation by Karl Neumann substantially better. He has: 'wie wird dir wohl dann zumuthe sein?' That is: how will then be your mood, your feeling? Not so much 'what will you think, as what will you feel about it?' It has evidently not dawned upon either translator that the text, in using, not their idioms, but the future at once of the verb 'to be' and the verb 'to become,' was telling, first the hearer, then the reader a different message, was betraying a different point of view from theirs. They might have been mindful that the word here used, *bhavissati*, could very likely mean not merely anticipation of happening, but also be—to quote Leibniz—pregnant with a future condition of the man. And *then* the Leader's care of his men would more clearly emerge: 'It's a hard time to which you're so determined to expose yourself, Puṇṇa, among those rough folk: what will it become for your own growth?' Had the Leader wished to bring out what Puṇṇa 'thought' or 'felt' about it, the idiom, one that is ever recurring in conversations, was to hand:

<sup>1</sup> Whitney, *Sanskrit Grammar*, p. 258.

*Tam kim maññasi?* 'As to that, what think you?' And the fact that it is not used here should have led translators to consider: What, according to the compilers, will have been in the questioner's mind to make him word his question just like that?

Many times in this book do I make my grouse over us translators, so much have we narrowed the beneficent openings, given in the main by our work, with such failures to place ourselves at the point of view of the folk in our text. My attempt here is to bring out, in the teeth of translators' evasions, the very distinctive significance in the Indian attitude, during the centuries wherein Buddhism was born and expanded, towards just this question of man as both being and becoming; or let me rather say, man's being as implying his more essential becoming. I have urged the truth and importance of this in all that I have published since this decade began. And now I have finally brought together in a general conspectus what I judge that the India of that date is trying to tell us.

To those for whom it is a matter that is not true, or at best a matter of no importance, whether man is in essence static being, or ever becoming, I shall seem to be fumbling among shadows. But for me, I repeat that, in religion, Becoming is either nothing, or it is everything. And at one time Indian religion was very nearly seeing this: nearly seeing that 'being' is only rational, is only logical, if, when fully expressed, it means Becoming. For of what rationally compelling force was it to tell the learner, 'THAT art *thou*,' and then to insist that in the hour of consummation thou 'becomest' God (*Brahman bhavasi*)? Clearly the 'art' (*asi*) in the mantra was illogical unless it amounted to that potential being which is 'becoming';

was in itself worthless unless it implied a coming-to-be.

'Very nearly seeing,' I said, meaning so discerning, so grasping, that the true was coming to be consciously and explicitly taught, and would, had it continued being taught, have remained an abiding heritage. But herein India in its Brahmans faltered and fell. The young Buddhism took up the outlook; then it too faltered and fell. Had it but listened to its Founder, it would, I believe, have kept its footing. I have several times suggested, and I suggest it again today, that if, in seeking to know that young Buddhism, we place ourselves in imagination back into the sixth century B.C. in India, if we steep ourselves in the teaching given then in Brahman schools to the sons of gentlemen, if we read carefully enough between the lines in the monk-bred, monk-edited scripture making up the Pali Canon, we shall see for ourselves how that Founder sought to rationalize what for every man to say 'I am' really amounted to. Let us, assuming we have before us a record, the skeleton of which is truly remembered, consider two answers ascribed to the Founder Gotama the Sakyan, as given in my *Buddhism*.<sup>1</sup>

The first of the two episodes is recorded four times. In one case the questioner is a Brahman versed in 'world lore' (*lokâyata*), or what we used to call natural philosophy; in two other cases other Brahmans question; in the fourth case<sup>2</sup> Ānanda, loyal cousin and attendant of the Founder, is assuring a member of the Gotamic Order, Channa, that he had heard his

<sup>1</sup> Home University Library, the rewritten edition of 1934.

<sup>2</sup> F. L. Woodward, *Gradual Sayings*, iii. 113 ff. (*Samyutta-Nikāya*, xxii. 90).

Leader making the reply face to face, or as the translator has it: 'From his very lips I heard it.' The questions put by each Brahman are:<sup>1</sup> "What say you here, master Gotama: 'Everything is?' and then: 'Well then, nothing is?'" And the answer given is: "Each of these two is one issue.<sup>2</sup> The wayfarer, not approaching either, teaches religion by a Middle. . . ." Then follows the formula which, whenever drafted, came to be known as the *Paṭicca-samup-pāda*, 'the coming to pass by way of': a series of causes and effects starting from 'ignorance' and the genesis of an individual (*viññāṇa*), and culminating (?) in 'becoming, birth, old age, dying and sorrow.'

Now, that the Founder of a world-gospel made his replies to questions put to him in terms of a ready-made formula is a thing too grotesquely impossible for a reasonable person to hold for a moment. It may be replied that the answer is given in a sort of word-puzzle to make the questioner, with his glib handing over of abstractions, think more carefully, puzzles such as we read of eccentric teachers of Japanese Zen and other systems propounding. That may be, but, in the first place, their puzzles are not in terms of a church-accepted formula; in the second place, those teachers never were or could be world-helpers of Everyman. It is true that the formula must at one time have been a new utterance, but the Buddhist scriptures hang it round the Founder's neck before ever he began his mission; hence, for their compilers it cannot in these interviews have been new.

My own conviction is that the formula has been

<sup>1</sup> *Samyutta-Nikāya*, xii. 2, § 15; 5, § 47; 5, § 48.

<sup>2</sup> *Anta*, usually rendered 'extreme,' 'end.' The word in such contexts means little more than one side of a position.



inserted into the place of a reply, which had either become, through oral transmission only, forgotten, or which had, in the compilers' reaction to changing values, been dropped out as something either erroneously or injudiciously handed down. When this 'revision' was definitely incorporated will have been at a time, when the formula had come to serve as a symbol for a certain customary way used by monks in bringing home their own monastic conclusions. And this will have been, as the monastic vogue grew, that the world, that life, that man was in a state of danger and ultimate misery. Thus, whether everything that we are aware of is real or unreal, we have only to look on the course of things to be sure that all is real in that it makes for sorrow, all is unreal in that it is transient.

Such is the burden of the statement which introduces, of the four versions, only Ānanda's, telling what he recollects. Neither this nor the formula is a proper philosophical reply to the philosophical query. *This* could surely only be that there is no being, but ever a coming to be; that there is no not-being, but a coming to be what was not before, true both for the very man as for the things of body and mind. Thus that the "higher unity of both being and nothing was the conception of becoming" was, in my belief, as true for Gotama as it was centuries after for Hegel. *Why* it became advisable to suppress the word 'becoming' (*bhava*) I shall be showing in subsequent chapters.

The other answer is similar, but in a different context:

"What say you here, master Gotama," another Brahman asks, "He who does the deed, is he the one

to experience ?” and then: “ He who does the deed, is he not the same as he who experiences ?” And the answer given is: “ Each of the two is a different issue. The wayfarer, not approaching either of them, teaches religion by a Middle . . .” Then follows the formula as before. Here too there can have been, as I think, but one reply: *The doer will have become* ; thus is he the same, yet different. The doer as such becomes, here and hereafter, he who is responsible for the deed done. One and the same man, but at a different stage in his becoming, not less than is the child-perpetrator one with the child at the next stage of child-delinquent.

In the following chapters I have tried to show how largely this question of becoming bulked in the three centuries of Indian culture preceding the invasion of Alexander the Great.

If the general reader—and it is he I seek chiefly to interest—turn away from considering the meaning implied in a choice between two words in an ancient Asiatic tongue or tongues, as too alien to have appeal for him, I would remind him how near, in his own traditions lies the very same problem of meaning and choice, the very same verbs, namely in the Bible.

Thus, in Old Testament Hebrew, scholars tell me that there is but one word *hayah* for both ‘ be ’ and ‘ become.’ In old Egyptian there are equivalents for both words; it is not impossible that with the growth of monotheism, bringing with it a higher worth in the idea of stasis, of permanence over against the plurality, the variety, the change in polytheistic religion, the word ‘ be ’ gained in its appeal and hence in usage, while the word there may have been for ‘ become ’ fell into disuse.<sup>1</sup> We have something akin

<sup>1</sup> Suggested to me by Dr. A. S. Yahuda.

to this possibility in our own discarding of the Anglo-Saxon word for 'become,' conceivably from a similar cause.

In the New Testament Greek, on the other hand, we have, as in India, the two words 'is' (*esti*) and 'become' (*genesthai*). And in translations from Hebrew into English, and from Aramaic into Greek, followed by from Greek into English, we find three curious features. (a) Translators from the Hebrew have now and again varied the one rendering by using not 'be' but 'become,' and with heightened effect. (b) Translators from the Greek have at times evaded the Greek 'become' by using the verb 'to be,' with for me a lowered effect. (c) Greek compilers have at times used the verb 'to be' where they have led us from other contexts to expect the word 'to become,' also with lowered effect. Here are a few instances:

(a) Gen. i. 7: The Lord God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul.

Gen. iii. 22: The man is become as one of us. . . .

Gen. xvii. 16: I will bless her and she shall become nations.

Exod. xv. 2, etc.: The Lord (is) my strength and is become my salvation.

Deut. xxvii. 9: O Israel, thou art become the people of God.

Prov. x. 4: He becometh poor that dealeth with a slack hand.

Ezek. xvi. 8: I swear unto thee and thou becamest mine.

Here, as I am informed, some inflection of the word *hayah* appears in each context where we read some inflection of 'become.' There is, I understand, another word, a 'predicative particle,' *yesh*, also capable of meaning 'be'; but in the foregoing passages only the other word is used.<sup>1</sup> We ourselves

<sup>1</sup> Professor S. H. Hooke has helped me here.

know how in the imperative 'be,' we are really implying 'become,' viz. in 'be good,' and it may well be, a Hebrew scholar may find this or that inflection of *hayah* equally impressive. My point is that for us, in the passages cited, the 'become's' are more impressive than would have been so many 'be's.' Our own word 'become,' which in Anglo-Saxon days meant chiefly 'come to,' came to have a value not less than that of the Anglo-Saxon *wairthan*, *weorthan*, *wurd*, which we had let die.

- (b) Matt. xxi. 42, etc.: The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner.  
 Matt. xiii. 32: The mustard seed . . . becometh a tree.  
 John i. 12: He gave power to become the sons of God.  
 2 Cor. v. 17: In Christ behold! all things are become new!  
 Rev. xi. 15: The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our God.

Here the Greek verb *genesthai* has been rendered by 'become,' and how great is our gain!

- (c) 1 Cor. xiv. 20: Be not children in understanding.  
 2 Cor. vi. 14: Be not unequally yoked together with . . .  
 Gal. iv. 12: I beseech you, be as I am. . . .  
 Eph. v. 7: Be ye not partakers with them. . . .

Here the Greek has 'become' (*ginesthe*), and although the imperative 'be' has got rooted in our idiom I judge that, both here and in parallel cases in Indian idiom,<sup>1</sup> it had been truer and wiser to have kept to the original 'become.'

- (c) Matt. v. 48: Be ye therefore perfect even as . . .  
 1 John iii. 2: It doth not yet appear what we shall be.  
 Heb. ii. 5: I will be to him God and he shall be to me son. So Rev. xxi. 7.

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<sup>1</sup> See below, p. 36.

Here the Greek, where we might by the foregoing have expected 'become,' has 'be' (*esesthe, esomai, estai*), the future tense being presumably held to imply sufficiently a 'coming to be.'

These instances suffice to show that it is no wholly alien question for us, this 'to become or not to become,' which in the following pages is inquired into in some detail. Hamlet's 'to be or not to be' is concerned solely with his survival of death: a fairly ridiculous query for him of all men to be debating.<sup>1</sup> The question for the religious mind, lacking, alas! in Hamlet, is rather 'what tomorrow, next year, in my next life, shall I become?' And it is (i.) the growth of interest in just such questions, and (ii.) the evasion of recognizing this growth in translations wherein lies for me (*a*) a feature new in its day in Indian religious evolution, and (*b*) the regrettable but not incurable obscuring of this feature. My pages seek to bring out the reality of this new feature and suggest how, in future, the concealment of it may be remedied. But I have said enough to show that the subject is not without profound significance in religion, whether, as here, the history under consideration be of purely Asiatic growth, or whether it be, as in our tradition, of mixed Asiatic and European growth. The value of the question lies in man's will to become what is before and in him to become, and nothing can surpass in intensity the interest for him in that.

<sup>1</sup> I refer here, of course, to his having sight of and converse with his 'deceased' father.

## CHAPTER II

### ' IS ' AND ' BECOMES '

(“ ATTHI ”; AND “ BHAVATI ” OR “ HOTI ”)

THERE is, there comes to be, for all of us a recurring and at times a pressing need to express that which, for us in general or individually, ' is ' or ' is not. ' The need may be merely concerning the contingent, the transient, the matter calling for description for convenience' sake. Or the need may be concerning the actual, the constant, the permanent, as contrasted either with the foregoing or with the unreal, the non-existent. In the case of the latter need, the affirming word attains an importance lacking in the case of the former. In some tongues, the ' is ' or ' are ' of mere description may then be even omitted. Not so when the reality of something is uppermost in the mind of the speaker. In that case the little word, useful in description as a mere showman, ' there's an  $x$  and a  $y$ , ' etc., becomes a very hammer of emphasis: ' There is. '

For instance, in the Kāṭha Upanishad, possibly contemporary with the birth of Buddhism, we find a wave of scepticism referred to, probably in academic circles only—" this doubting that there is . . ." concerning man's survival of death, confronted by this ' hammer of emphasis ':

“ He is, say some; is not, say others ”; <sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Kāṭha*, 6, 12: *astî-tyeke ; nāyam astî-ti caike*.

and then:

“ Not by speech nor mind may (That) be won, nor sight;  
‘ He is,’ we say, nor is he come at otherwise.”<sup>1</sup>

As in the Hebrew ultimate of reality, “ I am that I am,” so in Indian culture, the nearest to which man can attain in comprehending the Highest lay, here at least, in affirming the word “ is.”

The fact that, in English idiom, the pronoun *in* the verbal inflection:—the ‘ that ’ or the ‘ he ’ in the ‘ is ’—has been quite lost, weakens for us the force lying for the Indian in the verb *asti*. And this is for us a loss, for we see less clearly that, for the Indian, the bare word *asti* was not only interesting as emphasizing ‘ reality,’ but as stressing that *the Man* in the verb was real. There lay no gain, in either word or idea, by attention to existence or reality *as such*; the gain lay in seeing, in thinking: *That* (Unseen) is; He is real.

If we turn to Buddhist sayings, we find that, on the whole, the use of the affirming and negating ‘ is ’—in the Pali: *atthi*—is more frequent than in preceding teachings. We not only find the descriptive ‘ show-man ’ *atthi*—there is this, that and the other: contexts of which are perhaps more frequent in the *Abhidhamma* than in earlier books<sup>2</sup>—we also find the *atthi* where the wish is to know whether this exists, whether this is real, or, again, whether this is the genuine thing, the ‘ right stuff,’ the thing that really matters.

It is true that, we do not find, as in the *Kaṭha Upanishad*, the emphatic ‘ is,’ ‘ is not,’ affirming or

<sup>1</sup> The term ‘ is come at ’ (*upalabdha*) is also a Pali idiom in just this sense. Cf. my *Milinda Questions*, 1930, p. 32.

<sup>2</sup> E.g., *Vibhanga*, pp. 16-61.

negating Deity. The question is found, more than once, "Are there devas?"<sup>1</sup> But this did not mean "are there gods, is there a God?" It only meant are there men in another world? for this is what devas meant in Buddhist Sayings: what we might call 'men in a More.' The affirmations were concerned with man and his religious guidance. We must never forget that, at the birth of Buddhism, the cult of Immanence had gripped the educated mind, and Deity had passed within the man as integral with himself. *In religion the 'self' meant immanent Deity.* And so long as this was accepted, there could be no question as to whether He is, or is not. Only a madman would say 'I, the self, am not.' In the schools scepticism might thrust out a feeler: we saw this. But I find no echo of it. It was only when adolescent Buddhism began to drop away from the parent 'church' of Brahmanism, that the self (*attā*) as divine was ejected from the man, leaving the depreciated individual a prey to the new psychology, or analysis of body and mind, to be ultimately seen as a mere complex, thus inverting the teaching of the Founder.

We find the assertive *atthi*, 'there is,' in such questions as 'Is there a Way for getting to this or that?' (*atthi pana maggo?* and *atthi nu kho maggo?*), with the reply, But there is such a way, even this way . . . and then we get way described as it had *then* come to be, namely as 'eightfold,' with all its original implication of long wayfaring in spiritual growth blurred and faded.

Consider incidentally in this connection an assertive 'there is,' where the assertion is relatively meaning-

<sup>1</sup> *Majjhima*, Nos. 90, 100.



less, if we read the Way as “eightfold.” This is in the moving Sutta called the Three Motherless-sonless Terrors.<sup>1</sup> These terrors of perils, old age and dying, parting two such lovers, can be put away, transcended by the Way. How? Not by any ways of right word, thought and deed as such, but because this Way is not of this life only, but a wayfaring through one life to another in the long pilgrimage towards the Goal, and if the son gets a little ahead of the bereft mother, he will in such a Way be looking for her coming soon. “There is a road, there is a way making for the riddance of these terrors: what is the road? What is the Way? Even this very road”—the road we are ever telling you of—and in the text (a precious left-in) we see how after “even this very road” the category of the ‘eight’ is betrayed as an insertion.<sup>2</sup>

I have also found the Way-assertion—‘is there?’ ‘there is’—declared as real and efficacious for growth in other contexts. Thus the Founders give it as a panacea for getting rid of lust, hate and bewilderment,<sup>3</sup> and are shown recommending it for the understanding of ill and of the Goal.<sup>4</sup> Again, the assertive ‘is’ occurs in affirming a certain method (*pariyāya*), or aspect, explaining points of doctrine: *atthi pana pariyāyo . . .* (‘there is a method following which the five hindrances are ten in number . . .’). Or again there is the questioning ‘is there . . .’: ‘Is there lust . . . hate . . . Is there non-lust (*alobho*), etc.?’<sup>5</sup> And, were it worth while, I could adduce

<sup>1</sup> *Anguttara*, Tika-Nipāta, No. 62.

<sup>2</sup> Readers of the Pali will detect this. The translators have overlooked it.

<sup>3</sup> *Samyutta*, vol. v. 4 f., 27.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, iv, 252 f.

<sup>5</sup> *Anguttara*, i. 194; *Samyutta*, v. 219, 229.

more.<sup>1</sup> The assertive *atthi* may also be given with a more explicit emphasis. On the one hand we find here and there, in reply to the 'Is there?' *N'etam natthi ti vadāmi*: " 'Not this, it's not!' I say " <sup>2</sup>  
*E.g.*, 'Are such things the sights, the sounds and so on that are above all (others)?' And: 'There is this cleansing; I say not that there is not.'<sup>3</sup>

On the other, there are a number of Suttas, mostly in the Fourth Nikāya, a few in the Second Nikāya, where the assertive *atthi* (in this case in the plural, *santi*) is buttressed, endorsed, by the word *exist*, lit. 'are found ever': *saṃvijjanti*. Such Suttas are not about ideas, but about the man, about this and that kind of man. And the two terms are evidently taken as equivalents. Thus in *Dīgha* I., p. 3, we read: "This is neither fact nor real; among us it is not (*n'atthi*), it is non-existent (*na . . . saṃvijjati*)."<sup>2</sup> The reason for this doubled emphasis I have discussed in German and in Indian periodicals. I do not go again into it here, since my object is here different.

That wherewith I am mainly concerned is just to show that these assertions of existing realities could be, and were, expressed by a verb meaning just existing reality, a verb which was there, ready to hand. And further, that where we find *another verb* for what has for many the appearance of an affirmation of what 'is,' it will not have meant just that, but another aspect of real existence. *Atthi*, 'there is,' can only be said to imply the time aspect in the sense of the present, the 'now.' But the Indian thinker of the seventh and sixth centuries B.C. had somehow been

<sup>1</sup> *E.g.*, *Ibid.*, v. 329.

<sup>2</sup> *Anguttara*, iii. 325.

<sup>3</sup> *N'etam natthi ti vadāmi*, a positive through a double negative, not reproduced in the translation.

much stirred by a mighty and relatively new awareness, —namely, that things not only are, but are coming to be. And to express this he had also a word ready to hand, yes, and a word of fuller and not defective development as was the verb 'to be' (*as*). This was the verb *bhū*, to become, a word akin philologists tell, on the one hand with our 'be,' in its original meaning, on the other with the Latin *fui*, a defective verb in its turn, used only in literature for past (*fuit*) and future (*futurus*). It may be that this word emerged in the infancy of the Aryan race; it may even be that, in the near future, expanded research into pre-Aryan Indus-valley remains may discover a word or word-group, like or unlike in form. But it seems to me borne out by a comparison of pre-Upanishadic and of Upanishadic vocabularies, that there is, in the latter, a marked increase in the use of the word-group comprised under the stem *bhū*, to become, an increased use, not only in speaking of the concrete things of this life, but in reference to matters of religious faith and of nascent philosophy. I have, I repeat, put this impression into print more than once for the last six years, without earning the critical attention I had hoped for from scholars; hence I shall deal with it once more. But just here I want to place, beside the affirmations of 'being' (and the opposite), in the foregoing pages, the *apparently* identical affirmations we meet with, not in pre-Buddhist sayings, but in the Buddhist Pali Suttas.

These begin, not with *atthi*, but with the word *hoti*. *Hoti* is a contraction of *bhavati*, 'becomes.' It must be remembered that Pali, meaning literally 'row'—that is, a name *in space* as opposed to the spoken saying—was a literary diction, come gradually into

being as a standardized form of the many Prakrit dialects in which the Sayings had been handed down at different monastic settlements. And *hoti* will have been a dialectical form of *bhavati*, the *b* being dropped, and the *ava*, as in many words, condensed into *o*.

Here are instances of affirmations beginning with, not *atthi*, but *hoti*. The one best known perhaps is *hoti tathāgato parammarañā ?* with the three alternatives of Indian primitive logic—namely, the negative *na hoti*, the double affirmative and the double negative.

The *hoti* here has been translated, from the *Dīgha-Nikāya* (i. 188), by “ Does one-who-has-gained-the-truth live again after death ? Does he not live. . . . Does he both live again and not live again. . . . Does he neither live again nor not live again ? ”, and from the *Samyutta-Nikāya* (iii. 212) by “ Does the *tathāgata* exist . . . exist not, etc. ? ”, and again, in a later section, “ Is a wayfarer beyond death or is he not, etc. ? ”

Now to me it is reasonable to hold that, had the recorder of this fourfold query been desirous of expressing a fact of being, he would have said, not *hoti*, but *atthi*. The latter word, as we have seen, was to hand, and was so used. Why then use another word ? I am aware of course that two terms may come in usage to equate the one the other—*e.g.*, Did it happen ? Did it occur ? But it is at best a rash assumption in a translator to assume in an old-world idiom just *when* there is equivalence. It is wiser to judge that the meaning was not identical. Even in the English terms cited, the meaning is not coincident, as when we say: Did it happen to you ? and, Did it occur to you ? And I should myself translate the verb in the

Pali usually by 'Does he become after death?' etc. It is not a question of the static being of the man or soul; it is a question of the man's further wayfaring or growth: what, at the death of the perishable body, does the man come to be?

We have a similar question in the early Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upanishad: *kvâyam tadā puruṣo bhavati?* 'Where then does this soul (the man) come-to-be?' In other words: where thereafter does the becoming (which is the very life of the soul) go on? I wondered to see that Deussen, with the strong German word to hand, *werden*, had given the feeble rendering: 'Wo bleibt dann der Mensch?' (where remains). But then Deussen was a prejudiced thinker and feared the idea of 'becoming.' It is clear that, had the Brahman teacher meant a static perdurance after death, he could and would have said: *kv'âsti ayam puruṣo*: where is this man? And I could cite other instances, notably the verse in the Kāṭha Upanishad (5, 6):

Come! I will declare this to you:  
The hidden eternal Deity (Brahman).  
And how, with death to be attained,  
The soul becomes,<sup>1</sup> O Gautama.

I believe that neither the Brahman teachers of that date nor the later Buddhist drafters of the cited fourfold formula had static persistence in mind. The former looked forward with hope to that coming to be; the Buddhist monks with repulsion. But both had a more dynamic outlook than they are usually credited withal. For both, survival was not the persistence of a stasis, like that of the lighthouse (relatively speaking) with waves thundering over its base and storm clouds swirling past its top. It was a coming to be of a More,

<sup>1</sup> *Yathā ca maraṇam prāpya ātmā bhavati.*

a Further, wherefrom one could look back and say: So and so was I; so and so am I no longer.

And I hold that the word *hoti* (plural, *honti*), which, in the Suttas, is far more frequent than *atthi*, *santi*, should rarely be rendered by 'is,' 'are.' For the compilers *could have used* 'is,' 'are,' had they so willed. Take, for instance, this passage in the Fives of the *Anguttara* (No. 56): a monk complains to his tutor that he is physically and mentally unwell, ending with "and there is for me doubt about things": *atthi ca me dhammesu vicikicchā*. Here is a context where, in parallel cases, the more usual word used is *hoti*. Thus in *Samyutta*, xxii. 84, Tissa, the Founder's cousin, complains in the same terms, save that he says: *hoti ca me dhammesu vicikicchā*. But translators usually either render *hoti*, in such contexts, by 'is,' 'are,' or elude the verb altogether.

One famous formula there is, which should have rammed the matter of 'becoming,' not 'being' home to us long ago, and that is the genuine statement of causation, not the one-sided mantra of the way to stop the causal uprising of ill, usually credited with being the genuine statement.<sup>1</sup> It runs: *Imasmim sati, idam hoti ; imass' uppādā idam uppajjati*, followed by its converse. In English: 'This being, that becomes; from the uprising of this, that uprises.' Here we have *hoti* equated by *uppajjati*, uprises, happens, *i.e.* a coming to be, and used *in contrast to* the participle of the verb *atthi*: *sati*, 'being.' If it be said, But we

<sup>1</sup> Called in Pali Paṭicca-samuppāda, 'uprising-because-of.' The Commentaries more or less elaborately explain *dhammesu* by this and that doctrine, but this was a later shrinkage in the word *dhammā*. In Asoka's edict on teachings, they are called not *dhammā* but *paliyāyā*—*i.e.*, ~~*pariyāyā*~~, 'passages.'

have both verbs equated by 'uprising,' hence there is no compelling force in your contrast, I would say: Anyway the notion of 'being' is hereby shown to be *more* of the nature of a 'becoming' than anything static. By this formula it were *less wrong* to translate *atthi* by 'becoming,' than it is to render *hoti* by 'is.' And with the growing outlook on all things as 'becoming' that I find in the *early* Upanishads, I would see more truth in rendering *asti* by 'becoming' than is usually conceded. In fact, as Professor R. L. Turner has reminded me, *asti* or *atthi* "is rare in Asoka's edicts, and forms of *bhū* have replaced forms of *as*." Moreover, he adds, the former seem to have taken on the meaning of 'be able.' But this is scarcely true of the Piṭakas, where the word for 'be able,' *sakkā*, was to hand, and both here and in later exegesis often used.

Let us now consider certain contexts in the Suttas, where translators have felt themselves justified in rendering *hoti* (*honti*) otherwise than by its literal meaning, 'becomes.'

In *Anguttara*, iii. 1, 2, the Fives Section begins with the five powers (*balāni*): faith, conscientiousness, discretion, energy, wisdom. The learner is admonished to resolve: "we will become (*bhavissāma*) possessed of each of these. Thus should you train yourselves." Each is then given in descriptive detail as a matter of acquisition: the disciple becomes (*hoti*) believing, conscientious, etc. Clearly the *hoti* refers to a state into which sound training will cause him to come to be; *hoti* is a natural sequel to *bhavissāma*; 'becomes,' to 'we will become.' The same thing has happened in *Anguttara*, iv., p. 299, where we have another training injunction as to what "we will become," "Inwardly for me the mind shall become stable and well com-

posed,” followed by the words: “When for you the mind becomes (*hoti*) stable,” etc. Yet the translator has yielded to the usual way of rendering *hoti* by ‘has’ and ‘is’: “the disciple has faith . . . is conscientious,” and so on. And so the sequence, the emphasis, in becoming is weakened. And I am to blame that, in 1932, not having gripped this sequence and emphasis, I did not come to the aid of the translator, then a novice.

Then, p. 35, we have *yad eva so hoti*, which I should render: ‘Whatever he becomes’—namely a believer and observer of moral precepts, all stated under eight heads—“he will be reborn in a happy, not an unhappy world.” This is rendered “when he *has* (taken refuge in, and abstained from)<sup>1</sup>—a predilection for looking back rather than ahead, which I note much in these translations by this and that hand. The lady Chundī of Magadha, in consulting the Founder, as the Sutta runs, is considering what, if a person’s conduct becomes such and such, will he hereafter become? It is the distinctive outlook of ‘coming to be’ that is overlooked. Similarly, in the following simile of the banyan (p. 42), the force lies, not in the tree *being* a haven of rest to birds, but in its *becoming* so when had resort to. Similarly, when a good man is reborn into a family (p. 46), it is more literally true to say, with the text, he *becomes* thus for the well-being of the family than that he *is* so. It needs, to use journalese, the materializing of the new life and conduct. The baby comes-to-be the blessing, all going well. So also in the case of the soldier tested in battle (p. 89). By his conduct, brave or cowardly, does he become what is

<sup>1</sup> The German translator gives first a past, then a present: *genommen hat . . . absteht von . . .* which is no better.



potentially in him to be. Again (p. 145), we get the forward view in a man's not fostering health if he becomes an eschewer of medicine (when needed) or becomes eater of unripe things. And (p. 157) in the simile of the raja's elephant, it is in becoming beast-which, or man-who, cannot endure seeing this, hearing that, etc., that worth and unworth are shown. Once more the speaker's outlook is on the coming to be, as the test, rather than on a presupposition of something that it or he is.

In many of these contexts, there is, not an insistence on what is, but an evasion of the word *hoti*. In both ways the reader is not shown the distinctive Indian point of view. Yet how well *hoti* reads when 'becoming' is fitted to it we see in, e.g., p. 178: "because of them the saying becomes (*hoti*) like a thing with its roots cut . . ." and "they too become luxurious, lax . . ."

There is in some of these *hoti*-contexts a question beginning, not with the word 'what?' but the word 'how?' (not *katamam*, but *katham*). Now this 'how' ought to be a sign to the translator that he is faced by a question not of reality, existence, or description, but of procedure, of coming to be. If he will consult the *Dhammasangani*, or *Vibhanga*, books of the Third Piṭaka, which are catechisms perpetually asking for definitions, he will find the 'What?' ever at hand. In the Suttas, on the other hand, the 'What?' is very rare; it is the 'How?' (*Katham*), the 'Why?' (*Kasmā?*) that confronts him—the past causes, the present as pregnant with the future. For instance, in *Anguttara*, v. 212, we have "How, because of rightness, does there become (*hoti*) success, not failure?" The translator gives 'is there success,' whereby we get a dimmed view of the process of winning, not failing.

It is noteworthy in this connection that, albeit, in *Anguttara*, iii. 67, the word 'become' (*honti*) is evaded, the translation inserts gratuitously a 'when' . . . 'then,' as if not to lose sight of the fact that procedure in becoming is there. Thus, to give the context: "there are five right times for striving"; the fifth is: "the Order, in concord . . . becomes neither mutual blamers, nor mutual accusers . . . they of little faith find faith, and in the faithful there is a more-becoming. Now this is the right time for striving."

It is likely that these many comments may be called carping and captious. I would make this rejoinder. Translation from Pali is still a new literary departure, and there isn't in consequence a translator of today who in the future will not be said at times to have shown himself a toddler. We have all of us been translating with a dual pair of blinkers—our own literary idiom and our wrong notions about original and early Buddhism. And thus we haven't given the Indian point of view of the sixth century B.C., nor for that matter of the two succeeding centuries, a chance to express itself. Our literary idiom has never taken kindly to the word 'becoming'; in fact, when translators have felt compelled to recognize it in early Buddhism, they have taken it to mean, not coming-to-be or growth so much as mere transiency or impermanence. If the reader will look through any English hymnary, he will not find the word; for that matter neither will he find many definite explicit aspirations to *growth* of spirit. He will find plenty of implicit will-to-become; the opening numbers in 'Hymns Ancient and Modern are steeped in a beautiful earnestness of wholehearted devotion in that. Yet

how few lines word the aspirant as in a felt state of growing more.

. . . a road

To bring us daily nearer God

is distinctively exceptional rather than the rule. And whenever there is prayer to ensure a desirable state of living, both usage and metre render the 'be' suitable, not the become, which here the 'be' actually means—*e.g.*:

So be with us all and each !

Be ye gentle, just and true,  
Be ye kind to one another !

Be your work your worship too !<sup>1</sup>

In fact, the ancient meaning of the verb 'be' is with us still; we sing our 'be' this and that, meaning all the time 'become'; but with this handicap: the meaning of 'be' which we should give, if asked to define it, would, to be accurate, more or less preclude the notion of a becoming more.

Now it is in a becoming more that our religious quest takes on reality. Maintaining, 'standing' is good and needful; but, as we get no further, we shall sooner or later languish and fall back. "I praise not standing still, let alone waning in what is good. I praise growth (*vuddhi*) . . . herein is man a striver" are the great words ascribed to the co-founder of Buddhism, Sāriputta.<sup>2</sup> And if, in this aspect of life, the early Buddhists saw more clearly than either their aftermen did or we do, this is because of the bigger, truer outlook on the man and his coming to be which they had inherited from the Indian culture of

<sup>1</sup> Hymns 581, 584.

<sup>2</sup> *Anguttara*, iv. 95.

their day. We have gone far to close down the greater outlook which the theory of evolution might have given us; we see in it mainly an unfolding of our instruments body and mind, not of us, the ‘ man.’ The after-Buddhists did the same; the after-Brahmans were, before them, coming to do the same. Let us look more closely into this.

## CHAPTER III

### MAN AND HIS BECOMING IN THE UPANISHADS

SOME years ago I suggested, in the Grierson Commemoration volume, Part IV., that the subject of this title was a needed study, and that it would surely be a good thing if, of those who are competent, more competent certainly than I, someone would undertake it in detail. But to produce the urge to this, it needs an Indologist who discerns (1) the vital importance of the question of becoming, or coming to be, in religion generally, and (2) the dawning of this importance on the religious culture of India when the early Upanishads were first taking shape. And this is to repeat the call of Jesus: He that hath ears to hear let him hear, where ears as yet are not. With one recent exception, and that is Dr. Betty Heimann, who is, I am glad to say, disposed to agree with me here. A testimony to the need of such a study may be seen in the remarkable absence of consistency in this matter in translations into English, German and French. Of this I have already said something on the subject; I shall say more.

We have, I repeat, before us, in the Upanishadic Sanskrit (or 'Vedic') a double verb to express existence past, present and future: *as* and *bhū* (*bhav-*). To some extent this is paralleled in German by *sein* and *werden*, somewhat as in English we have in 'be' and its auxiliary 'were,' 'was,' 'wert,' a past, not a future aid. Now it needs first-hand acquaintance

with texts and with historic changes in their idiom to pronounce, with a flair born of some experience, whether, in a given passage, the word *bhū* as *bhavati*, or as otherwise inflected, means a more than does the word *as* as *asti*, or as otherwise inflected; whether it means a less than *asti*, or the same.

Take the Upanishadic way of expressing the three aspects of time: *yad bhūtac-ca-bhavac-ca bhaviṣyac-ca*: 'that which is become, is becoming and will become':—are we to see in the verb thus used for all three just our own 'that which has been, is and will be'? Or do the *bhū*-inflections mean a conception of time as a process of becoming, thus anticipating Henri Bergson by so many centuries?

From translators, I repeat, comes no clear guidance. With no sign of clear conviction about the dual verb, they render the *bhū*-contexts now by the verb 'be,' now by the verb 'to become,' now by evading both and inserting other expressions.

From the thought of our day, again, comes no clear lead about being or becoming. Our thought, I repeat, has rung for some time with the word evolution. But so much have we been concerned with its application to things material, that we have never fitly linked it up with the idea of evolution as being no less true of the very man, spirit, soul, self, as being essentially in a state of becoming, of *werden*, of *devenir*. Thus by 'man' I do not mean mind, or a complex or product of mind and body. I mean the 'mind-er,' he whose ways in using body are what we collectively call 'mind.' But then we think about this as crudely as we do because, as Bergson reminded us some years ago in London,<sup>1</sup> science happened to begin with the material and not

<sup>1</sup> Address to the Society for Psychical Research, 1913.

with the immaterial. We shall one day, maybe, be as alive and alert about the unseen 'very man,' the *puruṣa*, as essentially in a process of becoming, as we are now about evolutionary processes in matter.

That, on the other hand, man is essentially 'being,' that, as real, he is static is the prevailing standpoint of writings about the Upanishads, so far as I have had access to them. Such works ring with the phrase: 'That art *thou*,' or if preferred, '*thou* art That,' and from seeing identity as 'being,' their writers have relatively neglected the problem of man's coming to be, and therewithal the notable way in which *bhū*-forms are much more used than *as*-forms. In the columns of that valuable vade-mecum, Jacob's *Upanishad Concordance*, I find the relative frequency is as follows:

<i>As</i> -forms:	Early Up.	6½ pages.	Later Up.	2 pages.
<i>Bhū</i> -forms:	„	11 „	„	7 „

In other words, the (13) Upanishads reckoned as the earliest have nearly twice as many contexts where *bhū*-forms are used as where *as*-forms occur. In the remaining (95) Upanishads the proportional increase is much greater; I am here concerned with the early, the more important Upanishads only.

But in spite of this surely significant increase, in spite of a yet surely more significant increase, viz. the increased presence here of *bhū*-forms as compared with yet earlier Vedic literature, I do not find that Indologists have taken any note of either. Indexes, in what they show as to choice of indexed words, are, I know only too well, fallible guides. Yet, for the most part, it is fairly safe to say that if a term in an indexed work is one that, either in new frequency or in complexity of meaning, has preoccupied the maker

of the index, it will find due mention. But albeit this new frequency is obviously true of the term *bhava*, *bhavati*, any English equivalents for it are omitted from Winternitz's Index volume of the Sacred Books of the East, Vol. L., or, *e.g.*, in Deussen's and in Dr. Hume's Upanishad translations, are barely mentioned.

And yet this new frequency of occurrence is a fact that hits us in the eye. According to another valuable work, Bloomfield's *Vedic Concordance*, the verb *bhū-*, *bhava-*, finite tenses only, occurs some forty times. But taking the nine Upanishads generally reckoned earliest, I find the same finite verb used some 300 times. Now the just proportion between these two numbers 40 : 300, as compared with the respective bulk of the two literatures 'concorded' (one or two works in each of which are in both Concordances), I will not attempt to assign. But without precision it is none the less clear that the larger figure does constitute a notable feature.

(The number of occurrences of *bhū*-forms in each of those nine Upanishads may be of incidental interest:

Brhadāraṇyaka	..	86	cc.	176	pp.	in translation.
Taittirīya	..	10	..	19	..	..
Chāndogya	..	60	..	98	..	..
Kaushītaki	..	18	..	33	..	..
Kena	..	2	..	6	..	..
Aitareya	..	4	..	8	..	..
Shvetāsvatara	..	6	..	18	..	..
Maitri	..	16	..	47	..	..
Kaṭha	..	18	..	21	..	..

I have here used, for paging, Dr. Hume's translation, *Thirteen Principal Upanishads* (which is relatively empty of long footnotes), not because he always equates



a *bhū*-form by a become-form—he does not—but because I have no uniform edition of the text of the early Upanishads. My only text is imperfect. It will be seen that the occurrence of *bhū*-forms per page varies from rather more than once in a page to thrice that amount. And this is a quite extraordinary increase as compared with frequency of occurrence in the Bloomfield Concordance.

And yet I find, not only the relative silence in Indexes, but also no notice taken in analysis or description of this increase. What can be the reason? What do we actually find, in translations, used for these many *bhū*-forms? In the first place, a proper consistency in the use of become-forms when the becoming is a going on from this life to another and for final consummation; consistency, I repeat, yet with one or two lamentable lapses alluded to in my second chapter. Secondly, a more or less consistent use of become-forms when a very obvious enlargement in earthly life is mentioned, for instance, in the second Prapāthaka of the *Chāndogya*. Thirdly, a frequent falling back on 'be'-forms, doubtless when to use 'becoming' has seemed in English or German idiom rather forced, for instance, in the frequent "Now there become (to me) these verses." Or, on the use of 'has' for the *bhū*-form, as in Max-Müller's rendering of *Chānd.* 5, 13, 2: "he (who reveres God) *has* Vedic glory in his house"; cf. Deussen: "Brahmanenwürde *ist* heimisch in seiner Familie." Fourthly, a frequent evasion altogether of the *bhū*-form and resource to other idioms of happening, where for me is no adequate reason, as in Deussen's "Honour the mother," etc., where the text has "Become one-who-has-mother-as-God."

Such is the mixed consistency and inconsistency

which we find in our best-known Upanishad translations. And the result is, that the reader of them who is unacquainted with the Vedic text 'becomes' misled in no small degree as to the preoccupation of the sayers of these texts with their notion of life, in all its aspects—for that is what it amounts to—as a 'coming to be' more than a 'being.' He is not faithfully led by the hand to see this change in outlook, that was promising to become so pregnant with future results in religion. He does but get peeps; he is not allowed to see all. And so hindered, he has failed to see anything, as his guides no less have failed to see.

What has been causing this myopia? Am I perhaps seeing a coming to be in *bhavati* where only a being was meant? In other words, is *bhavati* perhaps no more than *asti*, the defective verb it is called in to help? Or has the Indian exegetist been seducing the translator, seducing him by passing over, or explaining away the force in *bhū-*, for the reason that the values of his own day had depreciated 'becoming'? Or again, has there in the translator himself been a wish, conscious or unconscious, to belittle the significance in 'becoming,' as being for him either of little importance or as positively misleading?

Let me take the last query first. Whatever has been consciously or unconsciously in the mind of the writer, including translator and index-maker, it is fairly evident in his work, that either he is not interested in the word 'becoming' and all that it means or should mean in religion, or he does not find that the Upanishads show such explicit interest in it as to determine his choice in translating, or call for special treatment.

As to the latter alternative, let it be noted that Deussen, in the index to his translation of Sixty Upani-

shads, only inserts *werden* (becoming) in it with reference to the *Bekämpfung* (contesting) of it, in two short Upanishads: the *Īshā* and the *Māṇḍūkya*. But if a term be so significant that the contesting of it, in these two latest of the thirteen earliest, be worth a place in the index, surely there is good reason to suspect that, in a great historic succession such as the early Upanishads admittedly form, the same term must, earlier in that succession, *have been championed*. And I contend that we do find this upholding of becoming. Of this, nevertheless, Deussen has nothing to say. But Deussen happened to be, not only a fervent Vedāntist, but also a staunch Parmenidean—he admitted as much to me himself—for whom “what is, is,” for whom becoming was just illusion. He held (p. 527) that because “the basic determinants of Brahman (Deity) are space-timelessness and unchangeableness, therefore there is (1) no plurality, (2) no becoming.” Hence, whereas he is very happy over the *Bestreitung* (combating) of *werden* in *Īshā* and *Māṇḍūkya*, and its “glorious continuation in Gaudapada’s *Kārikā*” or exegesis, he tends to belittle the striking and frequent *bhū*-references in the Upanishads older than these. And he often uses a weak substitute for what we should expect to find rendered by *werden*, no less than those contexts where he does use it—contexts, as I have said, where man, the God-in-Self, is said to become That Who he potentially is.

Of these inconsistencies I have given two; here is yet one more: In the early Upanishad *Taittirīya* (1, 4, 1) we read, “May I, O God, become bearer of the immortal” (*amṛtasya, deva, dhāraṇī bhūyāsam*). Deussen has here, “May I be . . .” (*möge ich sein . . .*). What a waste of a fine and truer word ready to hand!

Surely in the act of praying the man is willing to reach up to the Divine Will, willing to become, to be, a More than he yet is! (There is here not even metrical excuse, for he has anyway, in rendering otherwise faithfully, got too much into the line to scan.) Deussen apparently didn't want to find any signs of further becoming; he was not a sufficiently disinterested historian to seek for such signs; he even went out of his way to avoid them. He is therefore no safe guide for those who depend upon translations.

Nor for that matter are herein other translators: Röer, Max-Müller, Hérold. Messrs. Mead and Chattopadhyaya's translations, alas! unfinished, but breathing more the Indian spirit than any other, usually have 'become,' but there too are some lapses and makeshift terms. Far better in this one subject do I find Dr. R. E. Hume. He renders *bhava-* by 'become' far oftener than any of the preceding, even though he too here and there lapses. To take instances: in the sentence (*Brh.* 4, 3, 9) *ayam puruṣa svayamjoti bhavati*, how much more fitting is not Hume's "becomes self-illuminated" than Max-Müller's 'is,' or Deussen's *dient sich selbst als Licht* ("serves for his own light")! The text is not dealing with a static persistence, but with a procedure, an entering on the New. Again, Hume alone of five translators has in the same context not 'is' but 'becomes':—in the life (in his other body during sleep) earthly relations become invalid: "mother becomes not mother, śramaṇa becomes not śramaṇa, Vedas become not Vedas. . . ." Again, how much more enlightening for the reader is not Hume's rendering of *Katha*, 4, 15:

As pure water poured into pure becomes the same  
So becomes the self of the seer who perceives . . .

compared with the really wilful evasions of Deussen's and Max-Müller's 'remains' for 'becomes.' The reader owes much to that translator, who, at least here and there, has let him realize how much for those Upanishad teachers man's nature, life and destiny was not a being but a coming to be.

But only, I regret to say, here and there. Many are the contexts where Dr. Hume sinks to the obscurantist level of his fellow-translators, leaving that new Indian outlook as blurred for us as is in this matter our own.

Thus, in the impressive homily of the *Taittirīya* (I, II, 2), taken over by early Buddhism: *mātr̥devo bhava, pit̥r̥devo bhava*, etc., he gets no further than "Be one for whom mother, father are (as) God," albeit he is less evasive than Deussen, who, Hebraically reminiscent, has 'honour the mother,' etc. Just as if the teacher were not trying to make the pupil *come to be* better, more, than he has been! Then in the *Chāndogya* we have him shirking the Indian thought: (I, 9, 2) "the most excellent becomes his, the most excellent worlds does he win who . . . reveres," etc., by 'is his.' Yet how evidently is not the second phrase an endorsement, an equivalent of the first! Again, in the *Kāṭha* (2, 1) he is content to follow the English idiom (an excuse which Deussen has not) in rendering *śreya ādādanasya sādhu bhavati* by "well is it for him who takes the better," when the Indian was seeing it as a 'becoming' for the man. Once more, he shows a very common preference for European over Indian idiom, by rendering the coming to be in terms of a verb of process, instead of showing it as *the man becoming the new in terms of the man*. Thus in *Chānd.* (6, 8, 1):

Hume: "when a person sleeps . . . he has reached being, he has gone to his own."

Text: "when the man sleeps . . . he becomes he-who-has acquired being, he becomes he-who-has-gone-away-to his own."

And again (7, 1, 5):

Hume: "he has unlimited freedom," and (8, 1, 6) "for them there is freedom."

Text: "he becomes one who walks as he wishes," and "he becomes will-wayfarer."

Once more, in the new Indian way of expressing time in terms of becoming, a loyal translator could surely have seen herein a milestone of great interest, for it was a way that prevailed only for a time, and herein was a phenomenon of historic interest. No, with his colleagues Hume here fails to discriminate; and, for (*Bṛh.* 3, 8, 3) "that which they call 'what has become and what is becoming and what will become,'" falls back on "past, present and future." Yet the phrase *ityācakśate*: 'thus it is called,' is significant that time, thus expressed, was a current *vogue*; nor is it stereotyped, since in one context the future, unlike the other two aspects, is termed "what the Vedas tell" (*Śvet.* 4, 9)—here possibly metre-exigency drove.

Lastly, to repeat myself, there is in the *Kāṭha* (5, 6) a very noteworthy question about becoming, where we get, not the true word, but, as with other translators, evasion:

Come! I will declare this to you,  
the hidden Brahman, the eternal,  
and how, with death to be attained, the soul becomes.

Here we have Hume: "how the soul fares"; Deussen: "*wie es . . . mit der Seele steht*"; Max-Müller: "what happens to the soul. . . ." How are not all three

renderings a vision of the Less in man as compared with the true rendering:

*yathā ca maraṇam prāpya ātmā bhavati*

(and as-how, death ahead, the self becomes).

Here is no mere implication of state, of happening, of just faring on. These all are right as far as they go; but why *lose* the brighter gospel of the More, experienced by man when he sheds his bodily clothing and enters upon the New coming-to-be, by using our dull old phrases of limited outlook: fares, stands, happens?

Nor, for that matter, is Hume any better than Deussen, or Max-Müller either, in the similar phrase quoted above:—the question put to Yājñavalkya (*Brh.* 3, 2, 13): *kva tadā puruṣo bhavati*: where does then the man become, or come to be? He has 'what then *becomes of* him?' This peculiar use of 'to become,' meaning the state, the fate, the end of,<sup>1</sup> I would not go so far as to say I hold wrong, if once we condone the wrong use of *kva*: 'where.' But it is the worsened outlook on the man that I object to. It is a disposing of him as a somewhat on the level of all the material and mental parts of him in the first part of the question. His *x, y, z* are scattered to the elements: this is 'what becomes of' all that; but the very man, the self, the God-soul: where does He newly come to be?

Yet once more: when in the Maitri the teacher urges that the Self be sought after (an injunction, be it remembered, with which Gotama the Sakyan began his long mission), naming this and that divine attribute, Dr. Hume so far lapses as to call the attribute *bhava* 'the existent,' and not 'the becoming.'<sup>2</sup> Here he

<sup>1</sup> I quote my Dictionary's definitions of 'become of.'

<sup>2</sup> 6, 8; 7, 7.

might have crowned his extended use of our 'becoming' by ascription of this attribute to the Highest—a legitimate ascription as I shall show. Yet, like the reactionaries among Brahmans and then Buddhists, he falls back, and another lapse helps to neutralize the good he may have done. I say 'neutralize,' for, in no review or other comment on his in many ways so excellent translation, have I seen any notice taken of that which for me should go far to open readers' eyes in this matter.

For why should all translators agree to render the *bhū*-form by 'become,' when, and only when, it refers to certain aspects of man's progress, and then, most of them, weaken or evade when other aspects are dealt with? Why should the Brahman compilers have used the *bhū*-forms for one *and* the other, when weaker terms were, for them also, ready to hand? Consider these contexts:

in *Kena*: *pretya . . . lokad amṛta bhavati*: having gone forth from the world he becomes immortal.

in *Bṛh.* 1 5, 20: *sarvesāṃ bhūtānaṃ ātmā bhavati*: of all creatures becomes the self.

in *Bṛh.* 4, 1, 2: *devo bhūtvā devānaṃ yeti*: having become a deva goes to devas.

in *Mund.* 3, 2, 9: *Brahma veda Brahma iva bhavati*: who knows Brahma becomes just Brahma.

In all of these and others similar to them, Max-Müller, Deussen and Hume are at one in using the verb 'become.' Now why should it have this compelling force for them here, but leave them of many minds when the objective of the coming to be is different? For the Indian the one verb has served for the one objective as for the others: who are they to find that their native idiom calls for other verbs?

It has been said, in private rejoinder to me, *bhavat*



is not necessarily 'becoming.' Let me consider: There is the case of the future tense: here, the verb *as*, to be, being defective, *bhū* comes to its rescue, and the result is that 'will be' and 'will become' are but one and the same word: *bhaviṣyati*. Here is a case where 'will be' may be a more pertinent rendering than 'will become.' Well, I would suggest, that the fact of my having to say in Indian tongues, 'will become' for 'will be' weakens the word for me as meaning just futurity, and strengthens it as meaning process, result, becoming. No, may be the rejoinder, consider how in English we use, for the *past* of 'to be,' a verb that at one time meant more than just 'being'; we say 'was, were,' and that once meant 'remain, dwell,' but at present means nothing of the sort. With this I agree, and will deal with the matter in a later chapter.<sup>1</sup> As a question in what I may call the history of awareness, the point is, had the compilers of those Upanishads reached, in their use of *bhaviṣyati* (will be or become), the same stage of unawareness to which we have come in our use of 'was,' and 'were'? From the contexts I incline to think they had not yet reached our stage.

There are other cases: matters of material change or happening, where on the one hand to translate by 'becoming' may seem forced, as alien to our idiom, and on the other—and this is alone of importance—where the translator will *do no harm* to the new cultural outlook, on man as coming to be, by evading 'becoming.' Such as (*Bṛh.* 6, 3, 13) "fourfold becomes (or is) the wood of the fig-tree." Here there has been a ritual, presumably of chopping wood, and 'becomes,' as *indicating result*, is strictly the correcter rendering,

<sup>1</sup> Chap. vi.

but anyway it doesn't matter, and there would be no quarrel in these pages with the translator, if inconsistency stopped here.

There is yet another case noted above, where all are unanimous in evading the use of 'become.' This is in the not infrequent allusion: *tad ap'esa śloko bhavati* : usually rendered: "as to that there is this verse,"<sup>1</sup> Translators have apparently thought that the speaker is quoting an accepted incorporated mantra. I do not feel convinced. For instance, it is the speaker of this line who appears to be sometimes the one cited, not he who is citing another. And I suggest that, save where the 'śloka' is recognized as of a Veda, or an Upanishad deemed older, it may be, that the coming to pass of a creative effort is meant:—the teacher suspends his prose talk: improvising afflatus has arisen: and he says: "there comes to me (*i.e.*, becomes in me) this verse." I may add that in Pali, in the past tense, it is frequent as meaning an idea of the subject: *evam assa ahosi*; thus it became—*i.e.*, occurred, to him.

Letting this pass, as also unimportant, there still remains, as I rightly or wrongly see it, a preoccupation with the idea of Becoming and with the word for it, which in its frequency is, I believe, new, and as new, of great significance at one time, the time just before the birth of Buddhism, in Brahman teaching. Our translators show only too well that either the verb 'to be,' or other phrases, could have been used by the utterers (and by later editors) where, in the text, we find so persistently the word 'to become.' But the sayers don't; they choose to use the *bhū*-forms, and of these, by far the oftenest, the present (and historic present). The words *asti*, *asi*, *asmi* hardly ever occur.

<sup>1</sup> E.g., *Bṛhad.* 4, 4, 7 and 8; *Chānd.* 5, 10, 8.

Its appearance in the known mantra: *Tat tvam asi*: That *thou* art ! is in fact much more, so to say, exotic than is that of the forms of *bhū*. Occurrence for occurrence, the use of *as*-forms, such as *asi*, has a more forced look<sup>1</sup> than has any use of 'become' in the English renderings. It is when we look these facts in the face that we begin to realize how engrossed the religious culture of Yājñavalkya's day, to name no other teacher, was with the new concept of man as becoming rather than being, of the man, in becoming, as becoming More, and also as becoming the Most. In this frequency I see no mere chance, no wording without a cause.

Rightly or wrongly I see in it a new, a deeper interest in the man, not so much, not only, as being, but as in process of becoming. So much deeper, so highly significant that it could hardly be more so, short of the new idea being taken out of context and consciously compared with the older position. But as to that, it is rarely, if ever, found that an attitude in process of coming to be is weighed. Ancient literature gives us rather what is already done than what is being done. In these Upanishads I seem to be in a world of teachers profoundly convinced of the truth of a great and new mandate in religion, not indeed first put forward by them, put forward by some Helper of man of a slightly earlier date, which they are developing, exploiting, amplifying, vindicating. That mandate was, that man has it in his nature, by becoming more, to become ultimately That Most Who he potentially is, and that this was independent of the performance of ritual. Now they had no word for potentially—a word we owe to the Greek—so they fell back on the word, the great

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Katha Up.*, above, p. 13.

word which they had at hand, the word 'become.' When they taught "man is Brahma," the Divine Self, their idea, if not always their actual word, was "man *becomes* Brahma": *tat tvam bhavasi*. And I am venturesome enough to believe that the subsequent reaction against the teaching of Becoming led later editors (who were still *oral* editors) to change the *bhavasi* into *asi*.

If this be true, there is nothing here exceptional to tax editors withal. For if the reader will compare this mantra as we now have it with the sayings cited above about the man becoming Deity, he must surely see that these are in illogical conflict with the mantra. Man needs not to become That Who he already is. Unless indeed, by *asi*, the older teachers *meant* 'becomest.' Just as when we say: The child is father to the man, we *mean* the child is becoming the man, is potentially the man, has that in him which will develop into this, and not that sort of man.

If we can in this way retain the *asi* without wrecking the logic of the old teaching, I withdraw the "J'accuse" from editorial reputation. But at the same time, I hold that the *asi*, thus understood, fails to give any support to that sanctity of 'Being' (*Sat*) on which Vedāntist teaching has leant so heavily. Once we substitute, either in form or in meaning, or both, the *bhavasi* for the *asi*, which editors, with a repudiated Becoming, have handed down to us, then a gospel which, as stated, is perhaps the height of illogical impiety, becomes a message of light and hope to every man, in that it is the very guarantee of his personal salvation, in that it makes every stage in life, no matter how many the lives, supremely worth living.

But there is more to be said about Becoming as a

truer essential than Being. And herein the logic of the older teachers is vindicated. With man as linked in Becoming with Deity, there would necessarily go a mighty sublimation of this attribute. And so we find it; we find it raised to the highest power; we find it as a positive attribute of Deity-in-action, namely, in creation, as conceived in the Taittirīya, Bṛhadāraṅyaka and elsewhere. Here is, in the creating, no mere uttered fiat. Here is the Divine Artist becoming, the Very Self becoming, in the desire from the being One to become More, to become Many:—"Let me bring forth myself." Till this was accomplished, it did not "become this and that" (*na vyabhavat*). And, one account concludes, "he who thus knows becomes of That": man, in realizing Divine becoming, himself becomes Divine. (I need hardly say, that here throughout Deussen clings stoutly to his 'is.')

Becoming is here no longer a state of progress from a more imperfect to a less imperfect. It is in this too limited conception that the new gospel suffered shipwreck. Becoming is here raised to the higher level which we tend to see in the work of such a man as we call a genius. Becoming is in such to be described rather as a becoming-other, a becoming a new manifold, as it were in Divine play. And this, at a later date, was still lingering in Indian conceptions of Divine action, as when Rāmānuja dedicated his Commentary to that "highest Brahman . . . which in play (*līlā*) produces, sustains and reabsorbs the entire universe." At that later day the earlier Upanishadic idea of Deity Itself 'becoming' over Its creating had been virtually repudiated.

For it was a bold, if a great word. It was a conferring "the immortal" on man as a corollary of his

nature and not, as in earlier mantras, a destiny conditional only on a man performing this and that prescribed act. We see this: "the mortal becoming immortal," lingering on in the Upanishads. It was too great a gospel to withstand inevitable reaction. Was not immortality a chief aim in the sacrifice? Was the rite to be pronounced unnecessary? And so those progressive teachers of the Brahman and Kshatriya youth became as were the prophets beside the priests in Israel:—their mantras survived more or less intact and established, but the ecclesiastical ritual remained no less, and with it reaction set in.

Where do we see this?

The reaction against the concept that man in becoming is but being true to his Divine nature may, I suggest, be seen creeping up in the *Maitri*, but no more. It is not till the *Īśā* and the *Māṇḍūkya* that we find actual repudiation worded. (Here I am not forgetting that the *Maitri* is said to quote the *Īśā* (7, 11), but this is only in the admittedly later Khilas, the 6th and 7th sections.) The *Śvetâsvatara*, placed usually prior to the *Maitri*, cannot be said to sound this change. Still for it does the man become; become, namely, when he sees the very "Ātman, unitary, end-won, griefless" (2, 14). In the *Maitri* we find a hedging on the matter of creation as a becoming in Deity. In it the speaker makes the primæval Man, when creating, not desire to become, but "brood upon himself" (*abhidhyāyan*), "think: 'Let me enter . . . ,'" "utter" . . . Even in this Upanishad the way of becoming, then already a tradition, lingers, for we read: "This One became threefold, eightfold," etc. Yet the three phrases I have given for the creative purpose or act, whereas they may be by some rated as

riper thought, reaching out after more fitting terms, may, in my opinion, rather indicate a shrinking from the earlier bigger conception of Becoming, and are ushering in a reinstatement of the Highest as Being (*Sat*) and not as *Bhavat*.

In the later *Īśā* and *Māṇḍūkya* Upanishads, later I deem by several generations than the birth of Buddhism, we see implicit the confession, that this matter of becoming versus being had evolved into a battle-cry in religious debate. Becoming is now termed *sambhūti*, a term not found in earlier Upanishads. Becoming is now reduced to mean, not an exercise of an ever new manifold in That Who is, but an originating from that which was not—which is a different thing. Being as an eternal source and Being as produced (*ajāyata*) from non-being (*sat, asat*) is a moot point in the earliest Upanishads,<sup>1</sup> but it is now shown as, from either point of view, invalidating the actuality of becoming. Becoming is also shown as involving (after maturity) a complement of decay, which, is, again, a different thing, a phase of becoming proper only to the material world.

In the commentary of Gaudapada, which Deussen's biassed zeal forces upon readers of his Upanishad translation, we are landed in the view which sees (*a*) in the manifold and in becoming, 'illusion,' *māyā*, that bogey of Indian religion—and (*b*) that what really is cannot become, becoming being in truth only of what is there already.

In the *Īśā*, while there is the seed of decay of faith in becoming, in that it is viewed as involving passing away (which in things spiritual is quite unproven), we yet retain the faith that the man "in becoming

<sup>1</sup> *Chānd.* 6, 2, 1 and 2; *Tait.* 2, 7, and again *Chānd.* 3, 19, 1.

wins the goal.”<sup>1</sup> Here then is a becoming which, being of what is by nature Divine, cannot, I repeat, be held to involve decay subsequent to maturity. In the *Māṇḍūkya* this halting logic is purged, but at the fearful cost of voting man’s spiritual becoming to be an illusion. And this very definition of becoming appears as a source of bane in Buddhist debates said to have been held during the reign of Asoka in the third century B.C.

It is, in fact, the word of the ‘afterman,’ not as the afterman must of necessity be, but as we find that he actually was. He reflects his own age, an age unable to discern the greatness, the greater truth, in the older gospels of this world’s history.

And when I note, in the many translations of Indian literature, how the afterman in commentary has biassed the modern translator, I yield consent to K. E. Neumann’s trenchant remark, that “when ecclesiastical fathers and doctors go to work with the best will in the world to clear up dark mantras, they speak as would the blind speak of colour. *Auf mächtigem Glanz folgt naturgemäss Nacht.*”<sup>2</sup> But I add this reservation: I would undertake no translation without consulting the commentary, both for what it says and for just that which it does not say—for herein is also history.

When all is said, the commentator remains as one who sees worth in the Less and the Worse. For he, that is, his age has ceased to understand the real message round which the Sayings on which he comments were uttered. So he falls back on less direct and on weaker meanings of words.

I venture to think it will have been through exegesis

<sup>1</sup> *Īśā.* 14.

<sup>2</sup> Preface, Translation of *Thera-therī-gāthā.*



that the strong causative of the verb *bhū* is veiled under the idea of to foster or cherish. Because translators of Mahābhārata sections have so rendered this inflection, it does not follow that the compilers of that epic meant just that, or such weaker notions as 'propitiating,' 'comforting,' 'pleasing.' In its original meaning the strong form *bhāvanā* is nothing like that. Are we really compelled to fall back on such derivative renderings? For instance, in the *Aitareya* Upanishad we have this concerning the pregnant mother: *sā bhāvayitrī bhāvāyitavyā bhavati*: lit. 'she the maker-to-become becomes one-who-is-to-be-made-become!' Here is the poet-teacher playing with the pious idea of warding the wardress of man. Again, in the Mahābhārata (*Bhagavadgītā* III, 11) Dr. Barnett has the rendering: 'With this comfort ye the gods and let the gods comfort you.' But why should we not also make *devas* (gods) become, that is, become a more, a better than they were, and they us likewise?

The Vedic scholar, with a pantheon of 'gods' filling the picture, may smile. But he may forget, as I have good reason not to forget, that in consequence of the acceptance of Immanence in India's cultured circles and schools, a mighty disdeification had been going on, and *devas* had become, as we have them in Buddhist literature, the wise and kindly gentlemen we meet with, who had passed for a lifetime from earth to the next and better world, and who often came back to those who were yet on earth to give or to receive good counsel; men who were probably, their life-span over, coming again to earth in the long Road of each man's becoming. In this light the mutual 'making-become' in the More towards the Most is a reasonable advice.

But a less wholesome expression crept up in both *Bhagavadgītā* and Pali Suttas. This is the term *Brahmabhūta*: become-God. The affix *bhūta* may have come at some time to express, like other affixes similarly applied—*e.g.*, *-maya*, *-gata*, our ‘of the nature of,’ ‘akin to.’ But we do not find this compound in early Vedic, so that these instances in late Vedic and Pali become significant. The happy state of, in the one, the *yogī*, in the other the monk (*samaṇa*) consists, among other features, in his being *brahmabhūta*,<sup>1</sup> Here we have, as it were, said farewell to the healthier state of willing-to-become, of living in that will, and thereby of becoming step by step as far Godward as it is given any man, however saintly, to become on earth. The one-in-nature with the Highest is held to be already realized, but to the exclusion of any emphasis on, any joy in, the becoming More on the way to the Most. It is a premature value in the ‘done,’ the finished. Again, it is a value in the Idea, rather than the real thing. And that means that the man is holding himself in worth as mind, rather than as he who is minding. And as we should expect, the mind-ridden monasticism of early Buddhism shared in the expression, calling both the recluse and the Founder *Brahmabhūta*:

“experiencing happiness dwells with the self become-Brahman,”<sup>2</sup>

but being careful in exegesis to disdeify the compound by the equivalent *setthabhūta*: ‘become best’—if indeed to call man ‘Best’ be a disdeifying?

If the Buddhist slurred over the term, its once

<sup>1</sup> *Gītā*, 5, 24; 6, 27; 18, 54.

<sup>2</sup> *Majjhima*, No. 51 and 6 other contexts, 4 referring to Gotama; *Anguttara* ii. 206, etc.

pregnant meaning lost to view, the Vedāntist saw in it only the idea of identity, losing sight of the implied making-actual the potential oneness. For this is, as I have tried to show, what the original sayers were trying to say.

Not the 'That art thou' in the preposterous sense of the one term equating the other in any complete sense of the word, but the *Tat tvam asi* only where both *asi* and *bhavasi* coincide, both in spirit and in letter. Only through so living as to become the More, only in the future, *Tat tvam bhaviṣyasi*, with the living will ever working, will the man ultimately "be" in and as the Most. In such holy becoming there is no complementary decay to follow, as in things material; it is a Becoming-other in the More and the Many, which, since man is the Most only potentially, or in the germ, is, in his case, just a becoming-less-imperfect.

But it is not to be wondered at that we so veil this word of the life-career in, not body or mind, but the very man, when that very man we of today keep so in the background—so much so that the psychological tutor will call the 'mind' the 'director' of the inner world, so much so that we ever speak of X and Y 'dying,' of A and B 'being buried here,' of G 'lying in state' there. And we had not else so lost sight of the Becoming which was what the Sakyamuni was trying to say in his Way-figure, and for which India's mediæval manuals blamed his followers, called in them Bauddhas and Saugatas. For these followers had themselves lost sight of the greater sense of their creed, just as their critics saw in that message of Becoming only an impossible becoming out of nothing.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE NOUN *BHAVA* : BECOMING AND ITS IMPLICATIONS

I NOW leave the Upanishads and take up the Pali Suttas. The former, if we take of the total of 108 only the 13 reckoned earliest, are often called pre-Buddhistic. This I hold to be true only of six. In the others many terms and phrases found in the latter literature emerge, and justify the inference that the word 'pre-Buddhistic' may go too far. By 'pre-Buddhistic' I do not here mean just prior to the birth of Buddhism. I mean, prior to the time when the Pali Suttas were being orally handed on in mainly the fixed form, the monastic colouring, which they will have assumed, as the collecting and collation of Sayings went on at certain settlements of the Order (*āvāsā*). It would be too much of a digression to place a complete list of such terms side by side. But they may be said to begin in the *Kaṭha* Upanishad, wherein the Upanishadic use of many terms current in Pali Suttas is a marked feature. Such as Death being called 'endmaker,' the opposites *dharma*, *adhama*, the verb *upalabdha* : 'got at,' the term *saṃsāra*, to mention no others, many of which occur also in the *Śvetāsvatara* and *Maitri*.

The noun *bhava* is as rare an occurrence in the thirteen Upanishads as it is frequent in the Pali Suttas. The former abound in use of *bhū*-forms, but these are almost invariably of the verb. The noun *bhava*, as

attribute of the Great Self,<sup>1</sup> to which I have alluded is almost the only occurrence. Not till the (post-Buddhist) date of the *Bhagavadgītā* do we encounter the word in the opposites: “happiness sorrow, becoming non-becoming” (10, 4), and “the becoming and passing away of beings” (11, 2), which are also much used in Pali, and betray how the word ‘becoming’ had got wedded to the material notion of decay inevitably following growth.

From Sanskrit literature in general we find that the noun *bhava*, detached from its gloomy mate, bore the sense of good luck, welfare, good or well being, prosperity, and is equated with attaining, acquiring. This is reflected in the context in a Pali Sutta: the *Mahā-Govinda Suttanta* (Dīgha, No. 19). A king summoning his messenger says: “Come you, sirrah, go to the young Brahman Jotipāla and tell him: ‘May good fortune attend master Jotipāla! The king calls for him. The king is desirous of seeing him.’” In the Pali the greeting runs: *Bhavaṃ hotu bhavaṃ Jotipālaṃ . . .* And on the first word the Commentary has: “The meaning is: to Jotipāla be (lit. become) *bhavo* (i.e.) growth (or increase), success in all that’s good and luck.” Text then and Commentary give here the lay-outlook in *bhava*, void of any monastic or religio-pessimistic predilection. A man may not always be experiencing ‘*bhava*’; the friendly greeting wishes that he may. But in the monk’s purview ‘*bhava*’ is reckoned, by his formula, as one of the links in the causation of ‘ill,’ and desire for *bhava* is, by another formula, to be stopped by right way-faring.

Here are other contexts from the Suttas, in which

<sup>1</sup> P. 38.

*bhava* is used without being deprecated as something undesirable.

In *Anguttara*, the 'Fours,' Vagga 8, 'four highest-things (*aggāni*)' are listed—by an unfortunate error the editor put in 'four parts' (*angāni*). The fourth is the *bhavagga*: 'the height of becoming.' The little list merely enumerates; the Commentary explains that the life-span (*attabhāva*) in which one attains supreme worth (called arahantship), is the height of becoming. Hence, so far from being essentially a condition leading to 'ill,' which must be stopped, *bhava* is seen as the vehicle by and in which a man wins consummation. We can here begin to see that the word *bhava* is, has become, ambiguous; and there's nothing unique about it in that.

I come to *bhava*-contexts wherein, albeit we are no longer in the idiom of the lay-world, the word *bhava* is used without explicit depreciation, and indeed possibly without an implicit slight.

In three such, whereas *bhava* is used without explicit repulsion, we can see that it is no longer taken in the general sense of 'growth,' good, or good luck, but is meant to convey the more special concrete sense both of a particular span of life and of a particular world or mode of existence wherein that span is lived. The ambiguity about the word is possibly indicated in this one of the five as follows. In No. 76 of the Suttas under the Threes in the Fourth Collection, Ānanda asks his cousin Gotama, "In how many ways is *bhava* spoken of?" In the reply three *bhavas* are mentioned: the *bhava* of desire (*kāma*), that of things seen (*rūpa*), that of things unseen (*arūpa*). Now these are the three 'planes' of life most frequently cited in Pali scriptures. The first stands for this and the next life,

happy or unhappy, the second for the world of brahma-devas, the third for what was called at an early stage of the teaching 'beyond that' (*tat-uttariṃ*), but which, by after-men, became resolved into fanciful worlds of imagination in abstractions.

These three we find, in other contexts, called *tayo bhavā*—*e.g.*, "What is becoming? Three are these becomings: becoming in 'kāma,' in 'rūpa,' in 'arūpa': this is what is called becoming."<sup>1</sup> The *bhava* or world of this earth was included in the first of the three, but was more specifically called 'human becoming,' thus: "having put off human becoming" (*jahato mānusaṃ bhavaṃ*).<sup>2</sup> And all further stages in becoming are grouped under the compound 'again-becoming' (*punab-bhava*), again and again recurring in the Suttas, the final 'going out' (*parinibbāna*) being now and then said to happen "in just that *bhava*" (*tasmiṃ yeva bhava*—*e.g.*, *Anguttara*, ii, 126).

Once more, *bhava* was reckoned as one of three 'quests' (*esānā*—I prefer this to the translator's 'longings'—*e.g.*, *Samyutta*, vol. v, 54, etc.), the other two being desire and godly life. Of these, incidentally, 'desire' (*kāma*), in earlier days a worthy term for our 'will,' had been gradually worsened till in the monastic vogue it meant only sensual desire; 'godly life,' in earlier days a worthy term for the student's life under his Brahman teacher, and then for that bringing religion into daily life insisted on by early Buddhism, had been worsened to mean one aspect of monastic life, namely its celibacy. Of these three quests, one would think that the orthodox pronouncement would be, respectively, bad, at best doubtful, good. Yet it is said of all three equally that they are, "by making-

<sup>1</sup> *Samyutta*, ii. 3.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 73.

become the eightfold way, to be well known, understood, scrutinized, and put away." Into this piece of possible mal-editing by monks of old days I will not further go.

So far the term *bhava* gets off without explicit abuse. Herein it is of interest to glance again at the reply to Ānanda. The idea in the Sutta is that, Ānanda having admitted that there are those three worlds "wherein action may ripen," he is told: "Thus action is the field, the man surviving is the seed, desire is the rain (or moisture). Men that are hindered by ignorance, bound by desire go on being reborn in low conditions, or in the other two 'becomings.' In these ways there is 'becoming.'"

It were worth all the Piṭakas put together could we but get the original words of this little talk! In it we have all the framework for a gospel of becoming or growth, such as I believe that of Gotama was. We have the man viewed as the seed or germ, growing by his acts, well or ill, quickened by his will now in one life now in another.

I have rendered by 'man' the word *viññāna*, literally 'awareness,' and rightly so rendered it. The translator's 'consciousness' *became* the way in which this term was held orthodox, yes, and we see the change vehemently upheld and defended in one Sutta (No. 38 of the Second Collection). But in a few old Suttas *viññāna* clearly means the man who has survived death, and who can be seen by those psychically capable. And, in the talk, we have the word *bhava* discussed without abuse, as just an essential in the life of man, whether by it his becoming was meant, or the worlds, life-stages, in which he 'became.'

And it is scarcely wonderful that the word should



have had to bear this double meaning of both the process of becoming, as the most salient feature in man's nature, and also the 'where' and 'as what' of his becoming. For this reason—and it is odd it has struck no one earlier (that is, so far as I know)—the founders of Buddhism insisted on rebirth from time to time in this world, not as a contingent uncertain phenomenon, dependent on rites performed or what not, but as a certainty for every man and woman, to be followed, in each case by adjudication on the other side, the man being responsible there for deeds done here. (The only available word for 'responsible' was 'not freed from.') The next world with its five departments of reborn men was taught, with a distinctness as of things seen, unknown previously in India. And this was no brief duality of lives in man's long Wayfaring; it was a matter of very many lives, mainly or wholly in this world and the next. The worthy man as deva came to die in his world no less than as earth-denizen he died here.<sup>1</sup> Thus in life after life the long Becoming in the More towards the Most went on.

But to put these stages into words was a teaching newly clarified, and a needed word was not to hand: I mean the word 'lives.' There is more than one Indian word for animate existence as we know it: *āyu*: length of life; *prāṇa*, breath of life; *jīvita*, physical animation; *attabhāva*, self-state. But not only was there in none of these the breadth and depth that there is for us in the word life—a heritage of our Greek tradition—but there was no plural for it. Only *prāṇa* is in the Upanishads used in the plural, but not with the meaning of the span we call a life-time here or

<sup>1</sup> *Iti-vuttaka*, translated in *S. B. Buddhists, As It Was Said* (III. iv. 4). By F. L. Woodward, Vol. VII.

there. And transferred to Pali as *pāṇa*, it only means living creature (lit. breather).

It may be said: But is there not the teaching in fixed wording of the recollection, dawning in the arahān's awareness, of 'former lives'? This is true, and very well the fixed wording illustrates what I have been saying. The former lives are there called former dwellings (*nivāsā*). And in the later gloss, added to the more sober earlier formula, in which reminiscence is drawn out to fanciful dimensions, another word, 'births' (*jātiyo*) is used. Hence the convenience of using *bhavā*, 'becomings,' for any or all of many lives, as a better term than these.

And that is not all. The word for world, *loka*, came, it is true, to be used in the plural, but in the Suttas it is practically always in the singular, as if the word were as comprehensive as our 'universe,' and as yet I have found in these but one case of the plural. To make good, there are idiomatic ways of expressing the composite content of *loka*: these are ever recurring: *loko sa-devako*, 'world cum-deva-ish' instead of 'worlds of devas,' etc., *sahassadhātu-loko*, thousand-elemental world, and the like. In later Pali works *loka* in the plural is used; it would be interesting to learn whence came the greater elasticity. It is certain that had it been current idiom to say 'lives,' 'worlds,' we should have found these words in the reminiscence-formula and elsewhere. But in, for example, the Sutta-Nipāta, some at least of which is older stuff than some of the Suttas (since these quote lines from it), whereas there are 127 occurrences of *loka*, singular, the plural is not found till we find it freely used *in the Commentary*, where the meaning happens to be what our books used to call 'universes of thought.'

But the accepted term in the exegetical era was neither *loka* nor *bhava*; it was *avacara*,<sup>1</sup> which may be vaguely translated as sphere. This is the affix to those three worlds which we find from the Visuddhi-magga (cc. A.D. 425) to the Abhidhammattha-sangaha (Compendium of Philosophy, cc. 1000). And here again I have as yet to find evidence when and how the change of terms occurred. The word *kām'âvacara* occurs once in the first Suttanta of the *Dīgha* (p. 34), but in the long gloss of obviously later matter appended to earlier stuff. *Avacara* is rare even in the (later) Third Piṭaka. I am not saying that exegesis ignores *bhava*. Buddhaghosa's wordy amplitude was not likely to prune his vocabulary, and we find the three *bhavas* used by him side by side with this later term.

My point is here, that, in Sutta usage, we have to read *both shades* of meaning into *bhava*:—man's natural process of becoming (rather than 'being'), and the spatial and temporal conditions of the becoming—viz., lives, worlds. And that, when we read the *bhava*-contexts, we have to bear in mind (i) this complex of meaning, (2) the bias of the monastic mind when dealing with the subject. For the monk *bhava* meant a process of growth for a while in a world to be followed inevitably by decay, physical and mental. In so far as that growth was spiritual, this was for him the pragmatic kernel of his gospel. He enshrined this in a long but noble compound term, in both Sutta and Abhidhamma: "I shall come to know the unknown."<sup>2</sup> And the knowing converted into living he idealized in the new and nobler version he gave to the term *arahāṇa*, the worthy one: that is, the consummated

<sup>1</sup> Pron.: *āvāch'ārā*.

<sup>2</sup> *Aññāt'aññasāmīt'indriya*.

man.<sup>1</sup> This for him replaced the “becoming Brahman,” “becoming immortal” of the Upanishadic teaching, but at a heavy cost, the cost of making man’s consummation a thing conceivable and even comprehensible here and now, for there are surely limits to “knowing the unknown” under the handicap of this earthly body and mind. It cramped his outlook, and cramped it has remained in Hīnayāna ever since. In so far as that growth was bodily and mental, it was a doomed thing, and he had left the lay world in attestation of that (if indeed his motives were no worse).<sup>2</sup> *Bhava*, then, in so far as it involved more of this sort of growth, was to him utterly repellent. And by far the greater portion of the *bhava*-contexts are such as make this clear.

We find it in the first place linked with some fifteen or more affixes meaning states, literal and figurative, deemed harmful to spiritual growth, such as yoke, fetter, bond, thirst, opinion, fever, lust, leading (*netti*), canker, bias; not *bhava* only, but in company with other undesirable prefixes. Next, we find personal expression of derogation: “I praise not *bhava* even for a moment.” How far removed is *bhava* here from the meaning of growth (*vuddhi*) of which Sāriputta is found saying: “I praise growth; I praise not standing still!” The contexts are in the same collection, yet I am convinced that if Sāriputta’s words are a true memorial, he had *bhava* in mind when he so spoke. For the former passage occurs in an evident gloss, so little in keeping is it with the Sutta which it ends, either in style or matter. To this I shall return (Ch. VII.).

<sup>1</sup> I. B. Horner’s *Buddhist Theory of Man Perfected* (1935) is a careful and adequate study of this subject.

– <sup>2</sup> Such motives are grouped in the Piṭakas.

The gloss ends with very drastic abuse of *bhava* comparing it in loathliness to several foul things. The number of contexts where *bhava* is treated with explicit repulsion is about 28; where repulsion is implicit, the number is about 10.

My conclusion on the 'story' of Becoming, of *bhava*, is that, in early Buddhism, a similar veering of values took place to that which I tried to trace in Upanishadic teaching, similar but somewhat, not much, later. Later it would naturally be. When writers on Buddhism speak of 'the philosophy of the Buddha' it is a fairly safe conclusion that such knowledge of Buddhism as they have is much post-Asokan, indeed of this era only. There was in the India of the pre-Christian era no such thing as 'a philosophy' in the sense of a Spinozistic or Kantian 'system.' There was *vidyā*, 'knowledge,' later there was *dhamma*, 'ideal' or teaching; nothing more. Gotama's mission was to Everyman: "to devas and men" is the wording of the missionaries' chart. This would, it is true, mean that, in the majority of cases, the Everyman interested would be more probably a Brahman or noble or merchant than a ryot, a man of the 'proletariate.' And of these the first two classes would have had the usual years of training under a Brahman teacher as *ante-vāsika*, or resident pupil, if, that is to say, such a centre of education were within reach. (In Gotama's case it was apparently not within reach.) About those centres the more cultured Everyman he and his missionaries encountered on their mission-tours would be *conversant with the interest in bhava* so marked in Upanishadic teaching. It was when *they* had 'left school,' that the reaction against *bhava* will have set in. Gotama will have found them as yet untouched by

that reaction, and ready to accept a gospel even more expressly based on the reality, the need of Becoming, than what their teachers had given them, but which the next generation of teachers were reacting against.

In course of time, accessions to the Gotamic Community would have had a different, a reactionary training, and naturally this gradually made itself felt in the Gotamic tradition. With this result: that *bhava*, once the base and hope of that teaching, fell into the disrepute bestowed on it at the academic centres.

But I incline to think that the nobler meaning of *bhava* died hard. I believe it will have persisted in its original worth here, where there it will have become blasted. Let us consider two contexts in illustration of this.

There is in a few Sutta-contexts the term *bhavassa pāragū*, meaning literally ‘beyond-goer of becoming.’ Here are some contexts:

*Anguttara*, ‘Fours,’ § viii. (vol. ii. 9):

“To such . . . all beings bow:  
He hath passed o’er becoming.” (Woodward.)  
(*sattā namassanti bhavassa pāragum.*)

*Anguttara*, iii. 157 (‘Eights,’ Metta-vagga):

“In measure full  
He knows the stainless griefless state,  
Beyond becoming hath he gone”:

Hare’s eloquent rendering of the stately gāthā:

*padañca ñatvā virajam asokaṃ sammappajānāti bhavassa pāragū.*

(It is perhaps noteworthy that this, the last of six such stately gāthās, alone has one foot in excess; to scan it should read thus: *bhavassa gantā—i.e., goer.*)

*Samyutta* XXXVI, § 6 (vol. iv, 210): repeats the *gāthā*. Woodward's translation has here: "becoming he's o'erpassed."

*Dhammapada* 348:

"Let go the past, let go the things hereafter,  
let go the middle things, yon-farer of becoming!"

(*Muñca pure, muñca pacchato, majjhe muñca bhavassa pāragū.*)

*Iti-vuttaka*, art. 100 (Woodward):

" . . . such an one, the best  
Of devas and mankind, all beings honour  
As one who hath becomings gone beyond."

This word *pāragū* is not in one or two other contexts applied to *bhava*; in *Iti-vuttaka*, art. 46, for *bhava* we have 'birth and dying':

"Become ye those who birth and death transcend."

(*bhavatha jātīmarāṇassa pāragā*);

in *Iti-vuttaka*, § 38 and § 46, we have not only *bhava* but also *jarā*, 'old age': *brūmi jarāya pāraguṃ*. In *Samyutta* VIII, § 11 it is *dukkha*:

"Who hath transcended all the power of ill."

Now as to what is just meant by this word *pāra-gā*, or *-gū*:—Literally it is 'beyond-goer'; we find it applied to yet other things, not, as above, of an undesirable kind: Vedas—*e.g.*, and 'things,' or especially mental things (*dhammā*). And here the meaning is not so much transcendence as a 'going-far-in,' or expertness. So Rhys Davids renders, 'mastered the three Vedas,' and Chalmers, 'versed in every mental state.'

What then say the Commentaries? That to be

*pāragū* is to be one who combines a sixfold proficiency: superknowing, understanding, riddance, making become, realizing and attainment. Deftly expanded in this way, the work of a *pāragū* includes *both* a 'making become' *and* a 'getting beyond.' But since for the English reader there is no word of just this all-inclusive import, we translators should be careful in using such a partial meaning of that import as 'transcending' or 'going beyond.' Hence perhaps my own later 'yon-farer' is more prudent. Certainly, when it is a question of mastering one's fate and fear of life's ills, the Indian teacher will have had in mind, as more prominent in that manifold expertness, the 'riddance' *or* the 'understanding.' But was it *always* in the teaching a question of riddance when the subject of the expertness was 'becoming'?

The Dhammapada Commentary would say 'yes,' pointing out that 'the three becomings' are meant—*i.e.*, the three main localities awaiting man in rebirth: this and the next world, the Brahma-world and the 'Beyond-that,' life in all of which entails eventually decay and dying. That was monk-theology. But we have seen that in the self-expression of Everyman, *bhava* meant "growth, success, good luck." And not one of these can rightly be limited to states merely of body or mind. We are sure they included states of soul, self, very man.

Is it thus not possible that in the lines quoted, *to what extent they first took shape* when Buddhism was very young, the *pāragū* may have meant far-goer in the growth, success, luck that was *bhava*? And only later, when the monk-outlook prevailed, did the far-goer mean one who, together with 'ill,' had, so to speak, *chucked overboard* 'becoming'?



The English reader will see how relatively easy the transition would be in Pali, when he learns the broad, loose nature of the Sanskrit and Pali Genitive. This case, grammars tell him, can be used for any oblique case, for Dative, Instrumental, Locative, Ablative. Thus he can express 'faith in' a master, no less than 'skill in an art,' by the Genitive, and to do anything himself or by himself he can say, do it 'of' himself.

Hence the phrase which may once have meant yon-farer *in* becoming could at another date be taken to mean yon-farer or transcender *of* becoming without requiring any change in form whatever. The vital point is the real date of the first use of the phrase. And there is nothing about it which is for me a guarantee that the first teachers used it. Much in the *Dhammapada* is, I believe, very old stuff, but the phrase occurs there in midst of a monkish context recommending letting everything in life go. Therein, especially in letting go the hereafter, lies for me no people's gospel. And I hold it more likely than not, in spite of my attempt elsewhere to salve the phrase,<sup>1</sup> that *pāragū* does not belong to the vocabulary of the New Word of the Sakyans.

Yet that the word *bhava* may have been *simultaneously*, but at different centres, valued differently—here we have evidence and can speak with more confidence. This occurs in the great debate on the reality of the man or self in the Kathāvatthu of the Abhidhamma. No one wishing to get light thrown on the obscure history of changing values in Buddhist history should overlook, as overlooked it has been, this striking piece of involuntarily recorded procedure.

<sup>1</sup> *The Book of the Gradual Sayings*, translated by E. M. Hare. Introd. to vol. iv., p. viii. *Udāna Com.* p. 69 has *paripūrakārī*.

The episode about 'becoming' in particular lies, as I have said, like a fallen meteorite across those pages, so does it or should it strike us as a survival in a world where new values have replaced it.

The debate is between a representative of the relatively new Analyst orthodoxy at Patna (the Analyst position being that the man is a complex of upwards of 50 momentary *dhamma*'s or mental things or elements, *plus* body and nothing else), and an upholder of the older tradition of the reality of the man or self, or as we might say, soul. The Analyst, with a theory of depreciated 'becoming' fitted to his bow, asks: "Depending on what does man persist?"<sup>1</sup> The other answers: "Depending on becoming (*bhavam nissāya*) man persists." The Analyst then gets the other to admit, that *bhava* is a transient state, liable to be followed by its contrary: decay. This transiency he expands in seven equivalents: compound, cause-arisen, perishable, etc. He then turns on the defender and says: "Is not the man possessed of each and every one of these qualities?" "Nay, not thus is he to be called?" But it is too late; he is accused of now accepting, now denying, the assailant, not seeing, as our better logic teaches us, that his argument commits the fallacy of 'undistributed middle.' To quote a respected manual of my youth: "All Frenchmen are Europeans, all Parisians are Europeans does not enable us to infer that all Parisians are Frenchmen." Similarly, that transient things are becoming, and that man is becoming does not enable us to infer that the man is transient—*i.e.*, does not persist. We shall never know whether we have here a weak Vajjian of

<sup>1</sup> Kathāvatthu, translated as *Points of Controversy*, p. 56, § 228a.

Vesālī, the faithful city, protesting, or an editor, incapable perhaps of conscious deception, but out to make his own point of view forcible, and who has not given us honestly the defendant's statement, has, in fact, cut most of it out. But we do see Vesālī and Patna using *bhava* with differing values.

I would add, that the Commentary slips over the point, for him no longer vital, of all that *bhava* once meant, and equates it with *upapatti*, survival hereafter, thus betraying, that becoming had come to mean, not so much a general attribute of man's essential nature, as the concrete view of another life-round in another world. That becoming is 'growth' which could and should go with every new life does not apparently occur to him or to the Analyst. As I have said, the word *bhava*, 'becoming' is for religion, a mighty far-reaching term; it may also be shrunken to mean mere immaturity as bound to pass on into decay. Either for man it means everything, or—and this is the way most writers on Buddhism treat of it—it means utter materialism. The matter should have come to the front long ago in books on Buddhism and the Upanishads; and such would have been the case, if translators had not been ever at odds how to translate the word. A practically unanimous effort to render *bhava* and verb-forms by 'becoming,' instead of now by existence, now by rebirth, now by being, now by life, now by world, as I find in our translations, would have been of great service. It would have made clearer to us the prevalence and importance and changing value in this one term *bhava*, and thus have drawn to it the attention of the student of religious history who, in comparative study, cannot make acquaintance with all of the texts in the original. It

was the use of *bhava* for recurrence of 'lives' and 'worlds' that made the monastic body seek to throw blame on it where it seemed called for, and, as I incline to believe, substitute the word *vuddhi*, 'growth' where blame was, by the context, impossible.

Here, for instance, is possibly a case of the latter subterfuge. The Gotamic Order made much, in its own way, of the sacrament of confession. Monk confessed to monk or monks on stated occasions, especially after the cenobitic term of the annual rainy season, wherein, if at all, he had so acted as to give offence. And a formula was drafted for the occasion, and for record in the Sayings, as well as when outsiders made apology. Thus at the end of the second Suttanta in the First Collection, we have Ajātasattu, king of Magadha, confessing to Gotama his sin in his treatment of his father Bimbisāra. The given absolution, viz. the formula, ended thus: "Growth verily is this in the discipline of the Ariyan, who, having seen the transgression as transgression, duly confesses, henceforth wins (self-) control."

By a, to me, inexplicable choice, unsupported by the Commentary, Rhys Davids nearly forty years ago translated growth (*vuddhi*), here and here only, by 'custom'! Confession, it is true, was customary, as I have said. But where we study our religious literature ever with man as essentially a grower before our mind, we can here see the deeper truth recognized, that each new act of confession was, as such, a growth in awareness of the ideal as being always ahead of our performance. And I am sure, by comparison with the Sayings as a whole, that here is no emphasis on confession as 'customary,' but emphasis on growth in the Better. In fact on Becoming. And for me there

has been here a deletion of *bhava*, and a substitution of *vuddhi*.

No less has this been probably the case in the frequent contexts, where we find *vuddhi* opposed to *parihāni*, 'decay,' 'falling away,' 'worsening.' As I have said, the word 'hope' is as rare in the Piṭakas as it is in the Gospels. But in the former the word serving for hope is stronger: it is 'is to be expected' (*pāṭikankhā*). And in these contexts, a certain line of conduct is held to produce 'decay'; its opposite, 'growth.' When, however, in the passage I quoted from the Debates (p. 65), the upholder of the Founder's genuine teaching has, held up to him, the fact of the material world, that decay follows florescence, the word used for the preceding period is not *vuddhi* but *bhava*. If, then, those word-sequences could speak to us, I believe they would shout it was *bhava* that these contexts said, not *vuddhi*. *Vuddhi* was hardly a spiritual term; it was too closely connected with the body and the world for that.

Elsewhere another term came to be preferred and substituted; this was *bhāvanā*, more of which later. It also has served to keep the reader in ignorance of the evolution in values which I have tried here to depict.

Finally, and by way of supplement to pages dealing exclusively with the Piṭakan Sayings, I have here once more to draw attention to a compound term found six times in the Rock Edicts of Asoka, that wonderful new departure for Aryan India, and dating not long before the Order of monks set itself to the task of revising and compiling nearly the whole of what we have in the Canon of the Three Piṭakas. This is the term *bhāva-shuddhi* (in Pali, *-suddhi*, more often,

*visuddhi*). *Suddhi* had practically the connotation of 'state of salvation,' though literally it means 'purity,' 'cleansed.' Translators of the Edicts have rendered it by 'purity of soul,' 'purity of mind.' But to translate *bhāva* by soul or mind is what neither translator would ever do in other contexts, nor any other translator either. The long-vowelled *bhāva* they had in mind they would usually render by 'state' or 'being.' And it is true, that the writing of anything beyond bare commercial records (on thin metal plates) was in Asoka's time so rare, so little practised, that the whole matter of long or short vowels was in a quite fluid state. Even so, *bhāva* means becoming as much as being, the great Sanskrit Dictionary putting *Werden* before *Sein* in its art: *bhāva*. In any case it is clear, that the static and the dynamic, which we contrast by the widely differing words 'state' (or 'being'), and 'becoming,' are in the Indian *bhāva*, *bhava* much less contrasted. When Hindu metaphysic finally gave in its vote for Deity as static it used, not *Bhāva*, but *Sat*, which is our old friend *As* (*a-sat*).

Now in Asoka's messages to his people, we find a perpetual urging on them to be choosing the better; he is not interested in bidding folk be as they were and no worse. Hence it is in the first place nearer the spirit of his injunctions to see, in *bhāva*, becoming. And then, it must be remembered, that Asoka came to his great kingdom after there had been for some three hundred years a gradual growing preponderance of the teaching of the church instituted by the followers of Gotama and his missionaries. In that teaching much in monkish values scarcely reached the lay culture. Asoka had nothing to say about nirvana, or enlightenment, or the ills and woes of life or of lives. For him

happy survival was the aim of life, survival in *svarga*, the bright world. And to win to that, men had to grow better, in fact to become, to walk according to *dharma's* monitions. He spoke for laymen; so did Gotama. And hence in the Edicts, we have as it were, far more of a throw-back across those three centuries than we have in the long-drawn-out monkish disquisitions of the Suttas.

## CHAPTER V

### THE VERB *BHŪ* IN MOODS OF THE PRESENT

IN returning from the noun *bhava* to the verb *bhavati*, including the other five 'persons' of the tense, I seek to give readers a fuller picture than in my first chapters was possible, firstly, of the extent to which the *bhū*-forms are used in the Suttas, secondly, of the ways and contrivances used by us translators, in most contexts, either to prefer to use forms of 'to be,' or to evade both that and *bhavati*, 'become,' by using other more idiomatic phrases. Hence the reader who is in a hurry—and perhaps few now-a-days are not—can skip this chapter. For it is very possible that, here at least, my case against us translators will be found wearisome. As to that, I have found for us some apology by blaming the grammarian, as if, in the old jingle, one only said, 'cat! cat! kill rat!' after having said 'dog! dog! worry cat!' But, I repeat, it is the 'rat,' the reader, the speaker, the preacher, the writer on Buddhism, who has been killed by a cat who had first been worried by a dog. The dog has done his 'bit,' but it is the translator who, more immediately, misleads the exponent. And I seek to bid the exponent go more warily about his work, and be less cocksure that what he has read in translations is a true picture.

Let us in this case against the translator be discerning. I have referred to contexts where he *has* used, for the *bhū*-form, a form of the verb 'become.' These, which are far too rare, occur, as I have said, in the



Upanishads, where man's attaining new conditions in 'rebirth' is the theme, and in a few other of the very many cases where the *bhū*-verb is in the text. In the Piṭakas it is rarer to find the verb *bhavati* in connection with rebirth. In the Suttas the 'forward view' is more usually referred to by the verb *upṇajjati*, lit. 'uprises,' the common word for 'happens,' 'occurs.' And this is historically—for me—very significant. For, had *bhavati*, or *bhavissati* meant nothing more than 'is' or 'will be,' I do not believe that the change from Upanishadic idiom would have been made. But the monk had come to see a very limited advantage in any form of rebirth; he never dwells on the *curative* results of the purgatory in which he believed, nor on the *spiritual progress* to be made during a lifetime in the paradise in which he believed. There had ceased for him to be any becoming, coming-to-be, 'growth,' in either. It was just result and only that: an event following on events here, a matter of time only. All the more noteworthy are the rare cases where, in this connection, the verb *bhavati* in the future is used—whereof more in the next chapter.

But, as I say, there are a few welcome contexts in the Suttas where *bhavati* has been rendered by 'become(s)', either (a) where the translator might have used 'be' but didn't, or (b) where he could hardly do otherwise. Of the former (a) is Rhys Davids's rendering of a little set-piece put seven times into the mouth of the aged Founder on his last tour—a piece which is surely a substitute for what he really said, and for which Ānanda's record will either not have been accepted (he was not in good odour with the Order just after Gotama's death), or have been deleted to make way for a later orthodoxy. The text uses the

contracted form of *bhavati: hoti:* (*Dīgha*, No. XVI, 4, 4): “Great becomes (*hoti*) the fruit . . .”—namely, of concentration when thoroughly ‘made-become’<sup>1</sup> with morals, and of mind when thoroughly ‘made-become’ by concentration, the translator rightly repeating the phrase ‘becomes.’ How much more suitable for the figure of growth, ‘fruit’ (*phala*), is not the word ‘becomes,’ than if my husband had said ‘is’ or ‘will be’!<sup>2</sup> Yet the eminent German translator Franke has toyed with the word *hoti*, first giving us ‘bringt’ and then only, on repeating, ‘wird,’ ‘becomes’! Why on earth lead the reader to think, that the Indian compilers had used two alternatives? Yet how often do translators not play this antic with us!

Of the latter (*b*) is Mr. Hare’s rendering of the end of a world-cycle, when earth and Sineru blaze up and “become a single sheet of flame (*ekajālā bhavanti*).” And more of such cases could be cited, but here the reader gets the true rendering, and warning is not needed.

More complicated is the far greater number of cases, where, with no deliberate intention to keep out ‘become(s),’ the translator has found it more consonant with English idiom or more elegant English to use either ‘be,’ or ‘has,’ or some other subterfuge. I am giving of these a table, whereby comparison becomes easier. It is by no means exhaustive, but it is fairly representative. In one context, and one only, I have found an amusing inaccuracy in the opposite direction; the translator has, namely, used the verb ‘become’ when, in the Pali, there is not only

<sup>1</sup> *Paribhāvito*.

<sup>2</sup> He uses, for ‘made-become’ (whereof more in ch. vii.), ‘set round with.’

no form of *bhū*, but no verb at all! Thus, *Anguttara*. v, 203: *nanvāyaṃ khiddā purimāya khiddāya abhikkantatarā ca pañitatarā ca ?*

“Does not this game (come to be) finer and more valued than the former?” I may add, that the text has just used the verb:—“as the boy grows from babyhood, he plays with whatever things ‘become’ a boy’s playthings (*kīlapānakāni bhavanti*),” the translator using here, as more idiomatic, “whatever may be the playthings. . . .”

### *Dīgha-Nikāya.*

In all three volumes of the translation called Dialogues of the Buddha, we have the repeated allusions to the ‘superman’s destiny and treasures,’ etc., variously rendered:

### *Dīgha-Nikāya.*

. . . <i>mahāpurisassa dve gatiyo bhavanti :</i>	for the superman . . . two careers lie open. . . .
. . . <i>tass’imāni satta ratanāni bhavanti :</i>	these are the seven treasures that he has. . . <sup>1</sup>
. . . <i>assa puttā bhavanti sūrā :</i>	he has more than a thousand sons. . . .
<i>Bhavati vipuladīghapāniko :</i>	Full long of heel is he reborn.
<i>Bhavati yadi gihī :</i>	If a layman he grow to be.
<i>Bhavati vo vidheyyo patijānassa :</i>	Disposer for you . . . of folk he dwells.
<i>Lābhī acchādanā- . . . bhavati :</i>	Raiment . . . doth he receive (lit. becomes recipient).
<i>Na bhavati katassa paṇāso :</i>	What’s done can never come to naught.
<i>Taṃ lakkhaṇam bhavati tad-attha-lakkhaṇam :</i>	This mark such benefit portends.

<sup>1</sup> In all of these passages I (as co-translator) have failed to use ‘become.’

<i>Bhavati bahunnam pīyāyato :</i>	(As layman) will he live be- lov'd.
<i>Yadi ca na bhavati gihī. . . .</i>	And if not lay . . . lov'd (as the healer of their griefs).
<i>Ādeyyavakyavacano bhavati :</i>	Weighty the words of him will be.

*Majjhima-Nikāya.*

<i>therā bhikkhū . . . garāyha bhavanti . . . pāsamsā bhavanti :</i>	the seniors are . . . blame- worthy . . . are . . . praiseworthy.
( <i>bhavanti</i> is here used twenty times.)	
<i>adāsī bhavasi :</i>	you are a slave no longer.
<i>na miyamānassa bhavanti tāṇā ñātī'dha :</i>	no kin can save . . . (when one is dying).
<i>dve va gatiyo bhavanti ana- ññā :</i>	there awaits one of two careers. . . .
<i>tassa mahāpurisa lakkhaṇam bhavati :</i>	he has got all the . . . marks. . . .
<i>dhammavādino . . . duppa- ṭimantiyo bhavanti :</i>	. . . were awkward people to refute.
<i>yo bhavanto mayi manopado- so tam pajahatha :</i>	discard the delusion which besets you about me.
<i>parisuddhā suññatāvakkanti bhavati :</i>	there arises in him a . . . pure conception of empti- ness.
<i>bhavanti upasankamitāro :</i>	is approached by.
<i>te rañño anuyuttā bhavanti :</i>	(omitted).
<i>tapassī sudam homi . . . etc.:</i>	I have been an ascetic . . . loathly, scrupulous, soli- tary have I been.

(a case of the historic present;  
'did become' is strictly more  
accurate than 'have I been.')

<i>vuttavādī bhagavato hosi :</i>	you have faithfully repre- sented my views.
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(also historic present; lit.  
you have become a faith-  
ful testifier.)

<i>Ko nu bhavam hotīti . . . So kvaham bho homīti.</i>	Who sir are you ? . . . I am he.
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Here is one context where I admit that *homi* stands plainly enough for 'I am.' That *asmi* is not used is not easily explained. Had the Piṭaka Concordance been now issued, I might have compared passages where *asmi* is used. But when these Suttas took their final shape, it is quite possible, that the contracted present of *bhavati* had flattened down in idiom into meaning just *asmi*, etc., and not more.

The translator of the above is of all English translators the most careful—from what motive I know not—to avoid using the words 'become, becoming,' and I could add, from his otherwise notable translation of the *Sutta-Nipāta*, 59 contexts of *bhū*-forms, in which 'become' is used only in one. But the German translator of this Nikāya is, even with the convenient *werden*-idioms to hand, equally set on using a wealth of ingenious substitutes for *bhavati*, which must be seen to be believed.

*Samyutta-Nikāya.*<sup>1</sup>

<i>pāsamsiyā te pi bhavanti, bhikkhu :</i>	Yea, they become praiseworthy also, almsman.
<i>tālavatthu bhavanti te :</i>	Like to a palmtree-stump such men become.
<i>tanu tassa bhavanti vedanā :</i>	All minished becomes the power of sense.
<i>kamsapati evam assa akkhīni bhavanti :</i>	his eyes became like brazen dishes.
<i>Sabbanissitāni pahināni bhavanti :</i>	all such props become cast out.
<i>ārammaṇaṃ etaṃ hoti viññānaṃssa thitiyā :</i>	this becomes an object for the persistence. . . .
<i>hatthiyuddhāni . . . assa . . . ratha- . . . pattiyuddhāni bhavanti :</i>	such matters as battles . . . (evaded).
<i>Mundā pi ekacce brāhmaṇā bhavanti :</i>	some brahmins also are shaven.

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<sup>1</sup> These renderings are from my *Kindred Sayings*, i.

In *Samyutta* XXII, Nos. 7, 8,<sup>1</sup> *hoti*, *honti* occurs about 21 times, and is mostly translated by 'become(s),' throwing light on the Indian standpoint as one of diagnosis not of how a man is, but of wherein he is coming to be. In Nos. 39, 44, 53, there is a relapse to 'is,' the expression 'becomes utterly well' being used in very free rendering of *parinibbāyati*: lit. 'waned utterly out.' The relapse persists in No. 90, but better things supervene in 99:

*Hoti so samayo yaṃ . . . na bhavati :* There comes a time when the sea comes no more to be . . .

Relapse returns in No. 5 of S. XXIV:

*kapotakāni aṭṭhīni bhavanti :* His bones are bleached,

albeit the opposite page has the usual 'concession' to 'become':—

*So attā . . . so pecca bhavissāmi :* That self . . . hereafter I shall become . . .

Again later, the passages:

*Hoti . . . na hoti tathāgato :* The *tathāgata* exists, etc.

and

*ossatṭhakāyā bhavanti :* divest themselves of . . .

show similar relapse.

In *Samyutta* XXXV, No. 87, is an occurrence of *honti* where, used parallel with *atthi*, it is certainly more plausible, let alone elegant, to use 'are,' and not 'become.'

*Atthi . . . Vajjigāmo . . .* there is a village . . . there  
*Honti . . . mittakulāni :* are these clansmen . . .

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<sup>1</sup> The following renderings are Mr. Woodward's.

*Anguttara-Nikāya.*

<i>ye bhavanti vicakkhanā :</i>	if they have wits.
<i>saraṇiyāni bhavanti :</i>	these must be borne in mind.
<i>tayidaṃ hoti bahujanahitāya :</i>	This is to the profit of many folk . . .
<i>therā bāhulikā honti . . . sūpi hoti bahulikā . . .</i>	the monks are luxurious . . . the congregation is luxurious . . .
<i>Dvīhi dhammehi samannāgato . . . sāvajjo hoti :</i>	possessed of two qualities . . . is blameworthy.
<i>dussīlo ca hoti :</i>	he is immoral.
<i>bahujanahitāya paṭipanno hoti :</i>	lives to the harm of many folk.
<i>Kathaṅca . . . hoti . . . hoti . . . hoti :</i>	How does he keep watch . . . is moderate . . . is given to watchfulness ?
<i>Yam puggalam āgamma puggalo saraṇam gato hoti :</i>	. . . through whom a person goes for refuge.
<i>dibbo me etaṃ . . . hoti :</i>	then . . . is to me celestial.
<i>Pajjotass'eva nibbānaṃ vimokkho hoti.</i>	Nirvana of the flame hath come.
<i>hoti so samayo :</i>	it is just the due season.
<i>Navam vattham vaṇṇavantam hoti :</i>	new cloth is of good colour.
<i>hoti dīgharattam hitāya . . .</i>	find it to their profit for many a day.
<i>te bhavanti visaradam :</i>	those . . . are not confident (when) . . .
<i>pāsamsā ca bhavanti te :</i>	since . . . they . . . are worthy praise.
<i>Ānando tuṅhī bhavati :</i>	Ānanda becomes silent.
<i>na ciratthitikāni bhavanti :</i>	fail to last long.
<i>sattā visuddhidhammā bhavanti :</i>	men become pure in nature.
<i>anuyuttā bhavanti :</i>	everyone becomes a follower.
<i>ariyasāvako saddho . . . hoti</i>	the Ariyan disciple has faith . . . is conscientious, etc.
<i>tesam aggam akkhāyati :</i>	unto them is the best . . .
<i>bahunō janassa piyo hoti manāpo :</i>	He is good and dear to many folk.
<i>paṭisaraṇam hoti .</i>	becomes a haven of rest.
<i>atthāya . . . hoti :</i>	it is for the good . . .
<i>na ceva aññamaññaṃ paribhāsā honti :</i>	then there is no reviling . . .

<i>evarūpo idh'ekacco yodhajīvo</i>	there is here this sort of
<i>hoti :</i>	warrior.
<i>asappāyakārī hoti :</i>	he treats not himself with
	physic.
<i>na rājāraho hoti :</i>	is not worthy of . . .
<i>katham akkhamo hoti :</i>	how can he not endure . . .
<i>chinnamūlako suttanto hoti :</i>	the saying becomes like a
	thing with roots cut.
<i>bahulikā honti :</i>	become luxurious.
<i>ekajālā bhavanti :</i>	become a single sheet of
	flame.
<i>hoti so samayo, yaṃ . . . ye-</i>	there comes a time when
<i>bhuyyena sattā ābhassara-</i>	. . . beings are generally
<i>vattānikā bhavanti :</i>	reborn as radiant.
<i>yāni tāni kumārakānaṃ kila-</i>	plays with whatever may
<i>ṭānakāni bhavanti :</i>	be . . .
<i>so . . . orambhāgiyānaṃ sa-</i>	when . . . lower fetters are
<i>myojanānaṃ antarā pari-</i>	destroyed becomes com-
<i>nibbāyi hoti :</i>	pletely cool . . .

In the latter half of these citations Mr. Hare's loyalty to the use of 'become' throws the Indian standpoint into fine relief.

### THE IMPERATIVE MOOD; THE POTENTIAL MOOD.

As might almost be expected in a religious literature, the greater number of contexts having *bhū* in the imperative mood—and they few in all—occur in anthologies, or at any rate in verse. Let us come to Sutta through Gāthā.

Tradition makes it unlikely, that in prayer or injunction, the translator will not stick to 'be' in preference to 'become.' It is true that the logic of procedure is all on the side of 'become.' As I pointed out earlier, both prayer and injunction are uttered to bring about a change for the better, a coming to be



which is not yet. But we have ever preferred the wording:

Be Thou my guardian and my guide !  
Be ye perfect as your father which is in heaven is perfect !

In verse, not only does the less idiomatic 'become' sound clumsy, but the monosyllable is as a rule more wieldy than the bisyllable. The German, too, here usually prefers his *sei, seid*, to his *werde, werdet*.

There is a verse in Dhammapada, 236, for the translation of which I have compared seven versions beside my own. It runs:

*khippam vāyāma,<sup>1</sup> paṇḍito bhava !*

which I literally rendered:

'endeavour swiftly, wise become !'

But here I stand alone. I give the others:

Fausböll: celeriter labora, sapiens esto.

M.-Müller: work hard, be wise.

Woodward: strive quick, be wise.

Silacara: strive, be wise.

Bhagwat: be instant in thy endeavour, be wise.

Edmunds: work hard, be a scholar.

Saunders: come, strive and be prudent.

I am clearly up against a wall of, shall I say, prejudice, or just custom ?

Nor have I shown myself on the other side of it in my much earlier effort, the translation of the Therī-gāthā (Psalms of the Sisters), 8 and 9. Here two nuns are shown each admonishing herself:

*Mitte, mittaratā bhava !*

*Bhadre, bhadraratā bhava !*

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<sup>1</sup> This should, in my edition, of course read as here.

Here I have been very free, too prone to listen to the Commentator. I should now render these:

Become friend-lover, Mittā !  
 Become the lover of good luck, Bhadrā !  
 Yea, make become the good ! Safety beyond compare !

As it is, no reader of my book would dream how thrust to the fore were the pregnant words *bhava*, *bhāvehi*.

Nor is Fausböll any better in his classic *Sutta-Nipāta*, S.B.E., X., verse 32: *satthā no hohi tuvaṃ* : be thou our master ! and verse 701: *santhambassu daḷha bhava* : stand fast ! become strong ! Fausböll passing it over with: 'stand fast, be strong !'

Verses 337-342 give a combination of *bhū*-forms, five times in the six couplets: 'become endmaker of ill; become temperate in food; become filled with (world-) revolt; make become the onepointed mind . . . ; make become what has no lure (for thee).' Again, no sign in the English rendering. Nor in verse 224: 'by this true thing may there become salvation !' I turn to the Suttas.

In the *Majjhima* even the evasive translator of this—and let it not 'become' forgotten what a boon he conferred on the English reader by that long labour of love !—even he comes a little way to meet us in the touching opening of the third Sutta, where the Man who would name no leader to succeed him—how, indeed, could he trust those he saw as his survivors ?—is shown entreating his followers to become his true heirs, heirs not as men of Gotama (*i.e.*, 'Buddhists'), but of That divine Thing he opened their eyes to: God within as dharma: *Dhamma-dāyādā me bhavatha, mā āmisa-dāyādā. Atthi me tumhesu anukampā; kinti me sāvakā taṃ bhaveyyuṃ* ? "Become ye in dharma heirs for me ! There is in me will for your welfare:

how now may my disciples become that?" In the Further Dialogues translation we get so far as: 'Seek to be partakers . . . of my Doctrine . . . Should you be partakers. . . .' (Nay, in the mouth of the Founder Dhamma *did not mean* 'Doctrine'; Dhamma went much deeper, much higher than that. It was the dynamic aspect of Deity within Whom he acknowledges at the outset of his mission that he worshipped.)

In another Sutta, too, we are met halfway with a "let your life be" for the 'become' (*hohi*) of the text; but only here. The *hohi* is repeated some four times; it is one of those talks where, with a mere monkish stuffing, we get in outline the real urge in the original teaching: namely, of there being ever *something more, something further*: *uttarim*, wherein the man is to become, but neither becoming nor the further-faring is clearly brought out.

The *Samyutta Collection* has also a *bhava!* of prayer. In II, i, 9, the deva of the moon cries out to the deified Founder to be saved from the eclipsing dragon Rāhu: "You who are wholly free, become a refuge to me who fare in bonds!" But the 'be' tradition was too strong for either Dr. Geiger or me to render *bhava!* by 'become!' Elsewhere Dr. Geiger makes good. In *Samyutta IX*, i, we have a woodland deva exhorting a monk: *sato bhavāsi!* 'become heedful!' a form, as the Doctor points out, of the subjunctive used as imperative, and now he gives us: 'besonnen werde!' How good it is at last to hear that latter word!

As to other moods of the present: subjunctive, potential, participle, infinitive: well, this little study is nowhere intended to be exhaustive; nor do the very few occurrences of these *bhū*-forms suggest anything I have not discussed under the first two forms. We

should only find the same subterfuges prevailing among all of us translators, this time with perhaps the more excuse in that the reproduction of 'become' is at times clumsy to deal with. Here are instances from the Second and Fourth Collections.

*Majjhima*, No. 70:

"If I had not this knowledge . . . would it beseem me to say . . ."

(*Mayā c'etaṃ aññātaṃ abhaviṣṣa . . . evarūpaṃ . . . vadeyyaṃ, aṇi nu me etaṃ paṭivūpaṃ abhavissati?*)

Literally this runs: "By me had this not become known . . . would it become seemly for me to say this?"

Again, *Majjhima*, No. 63:

"The higher life is not contingent on the truth or falsehood of any thesis."

(*Sassato loko ti diṭṭhiyā sati, brahmacariyavāso abhavissati evaṃ no?*)

Literally this runs: 'Eternal (is) the world: given this opinion, would there become divine living or not?'

*Anguttara*, 'Twos,' vagga II:

"Make the good become; it is possible to make it become. If it were not possible . . . I should not be saying to you this."

(*Kusalaṃ bhāvettha ; sakkā kusalaṃ bhāvetum. No ce taṃ sakkā abhaviṣṣa . . . n'āham evaṃ vadeyyaṃ kusalaṃ bhāvetthā-ti.*)

Clearly we are here again dealing with results which may or may not come to be; we are in the world of cause and effect; the world of becoming from what as yet was not. But no translation of these contexts known to me uses any verb but 'have' or 'be.' And only a deep conviction, that the Indian was trying to say more than could be said by those two words would

drive a translator to lessen the 'seemliness' of his work with the use of 'become.' For this reason it is all the more refreshing to find Woodward's "The things whereby I might" (or is it 'should'?) "become a deva . . ." or other forms of rebirth, "they for me are cut off." With him the use of 'become' for the *bhū*-form was tending to be the rule, even if lapses test it.

There is one occurrence of the optative form of *bhū* in the Piṭakas which is for me one of the most significant survivals in the whole Canon, albeit none but I yet see it as such. I have referred to it repeatedly in these last seven years and repeat it here.

It is the one word in patois form: *huveyya*: 'may he become,' said to have been uttered by a mendicant friar Upaka, in response to what the founder of Buddhism may have said to him when they passed each other on the road. Gotama, keyed up to teach his new message of man's choosing a middle way as leading him to the aim of his quest, impresses by his radiant mien Upaka, who asks him who is the inspiring teacher he must have been with. The Founder replies, according to the record, in terms of supreme conceit referring to himself. Upaka replies: You claim by what you say to be infinitely victorious (*i.e.*, superior)? Gotama is made to qualify his claim as being one of spiritual conquest. Upaka, it is said, shaking his head, mutters: *Huveyya*, or *huṭṭeyya*<sup>2</sup> and passes on. The three recensions reporting the interview arrange the sayings differently, but the verb "May (he) become" stands in all, but stands alone, unconnected.

<sup>1</sup> *The Book of the Gradual Sayings*, ii. 44.

<sup>2</sup> There are three recensions: *Vinaya* (*Mahāvagga* I), *Majjhima*, No. 23, and *Commentary on Therīgāthā*, LXVIII.

Translators render the word differently: Oldenberg with "It may be so," Chalmers, preserving the patois, with "Mebbe!" But as usual the full meaning of the *bhū*-form is eviscerated.

Assuming that we have here a true record—only Gotama or Upaka could have reported it—and that in saying 'may (he) become,' and not *siyā*: 'may (he) be!' it is open to us after long ages to choose which will we have: 'may it become!' or 'may he become!'

I cast my vote for the latter, however plausibly the former may read. Let us stay a moment to consider the context. What in those few moments did Gotama *really tell Upakā?* He was too great a man to have broken out in extravagant terms about himself, he a yet untried teacher. That piece can only have been inserted—it is in the Sayings of the Fourth Collection without the incident—by later editorial piety. Moreover, he was not coming from any teacher; he was on his way to become one, with helpers. We see in these two an impressive contrast: in Upaka a man rating life in a way the majority did not rate it; a malcontent with life as he found it; a valuer of the *not*, the *less* in man's life, a valuer of the not-to-be; in Gotama a man about to give a message to men to value what might be, what could, what should, what ought to become, in a wiser view of life.

For so much there is documentary evidence, but here I go beyond. Critics may call this 'intuition,' a polite term for guessing, for inferring from no premises. Let that be; my contention is, that we have here a glaringly imperfect misrepresentation of what a man like Gotama will possibly have said, and omission of what he must have said to have got that one word in response, whether we render it by 'be' or by 'become.'

According to the text, Gotama has held out no plan for "making things be, or become, so." But if we assume (not intuit, Mr. Critic), that he rehearsed to Upaka the message he was about to utter, as the way-chart of his mission, *then* Upaka's response becomes plausible. Things or men were to be taught to become so.

Much more plausible will it 'become,' if we recast that First Utterance as containing a call to man to choose the way he had been declared to be sorely needing: the way not of decline, but of becoming, that is, of growth. But of this more in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE VERB IN THE FUTURE TENSE

THE verb *bhū* in its future inflection offers perhaps the hardest task to the translator, who is more anxious to give us the true rendering than to be commended for his finished style of conversion into his native tongue. The verb *as*, 'to be,' apparently never had a future tense; the stronger verb has to come to its aid; hence *bhaviṣyati*, Pali: *bhavissati*, has to do all the work, and may mean either simple recurrence: 'will be,' or not yet occurred result: 'will become.' A case of the former is in the Upanishadic way of expressing time: 'what has become, is, will be or become.' A case of the latter is "by this course of action I shall become a deva" (*devo bhavissāmi*, *Majjhimā* I, 102).

When the latter is meant, we are no more dealing with the happening of things considered as just the future ticks of a ticking clock; we are in the sphere of values, and of values in the man. We are no more concerned with 'being' only, we are confronting a 'becoming,' a becoming thus or thus, which, for the man-in-religion at least, means a more or a less, a better or a worse. And since *it is this, in religious records, that matters*, I hold that, with hardly any exception, the translator who renders the future tense of *bhū* by 'will become' will keep nearer the true than he who writes 'will be.'

But for the most part translators have apparently



not been of this opinion; it is fatally easy to slip into the future of 'to be,' and leave it at that. This may be on their part an unwillingness to use a relatively little used English verb; but I judge it is equally a result of our own apathy in outlook. Unless we are men of action or of practical science and engaged therein, or unless we have, in our religious heed to our growth or decline, a much more thoroughly interested will than is usually the case, we are content to speak of the future as just occurrence. Yet the fact, that in ancient Indian idiom, things to come were of necessity spoken of as *things that will become*, may have made it feasible for a world gospel, which dealt as much with the hereafter as it did with the present, to be born and to flourish. For let it not be forgotten, in this connection, that Gotama's gospel is, by a contemporary, distinguished as having an *aim that was of the hereafter* (*attho samparāyiko*).<sup>1</sup>

Here the translator might say: But would you not admit, that the Indian, in using the auxiliary *bhū* to express something in the future, had lost the distinction of meaning between 'will be' and 'will become,' and meant just future occurrence; just as we, in using the auxiliary verb 'was, were, wast,' which is from a different root, came to mean nothing more than past occurrence? 'Was,' our books say, once meant 'dwell' (*was*; in Pali, *vas*), but we call up no notion of dwelling in using it, any more than for that matter we link our 'be' with the becoming *it* originally meant. These lost meanings are as dead as doornails.

Yes, in *our* case that is true enough. But whether it was equally true for the Angle and the Saxon in

<sup>1</sup> *Vinaya, Mahāvagga*, v. 1. Freely translated by Rhys Davids as "the things of eternity."

Teutonic countries 2,400 years ago is not so certain. As we saw in the Buddhist term for past lives, the past may have been, both for our forefathers and for the Teuton, expressed by a sense of 'whereness' they once had, in other words, the place where the man 'is,' 'becomes,' but which is not now true of him. And a great change will have come over our tongue when 'dwells' came to mean just 'is not now there.' The notion of 'dwelling' may have died hard and slowly; conceivably the lingering of the historic-present, in old literature and in the talk of the illiterate: 'I says to 'er, I says,' may belong to a day when the change had not been complete, and the present was used for the past as well.

The fact that, as I tried to show in a former chapter, there was a vigorous increase in the use of *bhū*-forms during the seventh and sixth centuries B.C. in Indian sayings, militates against the fact, that the meaning of the auxiliary *bhū* was faded and merged into the meaning of the verb 'to be.' We shall not get at the truth, if we treat this history of the use of *bhū* independently of the new phase in the history of that Indian religion which *tried to find expression* in the history of that verb. Man in estimating himself as one in nature with the Highest was less than ever a man of earth only. Man of two worlds was he now, worlds human and divine, yes, man of many worlds. His it had become to look around with vision lit up by a divine purview. His it was to be faring onward in a supreme becoming in the More towards the Most. True, it was no new thing for him to be speaking of things to come as that which will not be, but become. But whereas, on the one hand, we cannot here and now be certain that for him, there and then, 'will become'

meant just 'will be,' and nothing more, the *fact*, on the other hand, that he was in his religious Sayings using the word 'become' at a rate of 600 per cent. oftener than his ancestors had done, scarcely points to a fading out of a special significance in that use.

And so I reply to my translator's inquiry, that just as I believe there was an intermediate stage in pre-English diction, when to say 'you were' carried with it a (sub-) awareness of 'you dwelt,' so I believe, that in Prakrit dialects, to say 'you will be' carried with it an awareness (possibly only 'sub'), of 'you will become.' I hold that we are not justified in glibly assuming perpetual unawareness in the former case as well as in the latter. The former is certainly true of us now, and has long been true; it is not equally certain in the latter case when (if indeed at any time) total unawareness set in. So far from such certainty are we, that the Upanishadic increase in the use of *bhū*-forms makes it at least probable, that a fresh wave of awareness of the distinctive meaning in 'becoming' had arisen. And this wave *prevailed long enough to determine the start of original Buddhism*, before it ebbed in a reaction affecting, first, Brahmanism (or, as it is usually called, early Vedāntism) and then Buddhism itself.

Now I have examined every occurrence of the future tense of *bhū* in the Pali Suttas, and here invite the thoughtful reader to consider the result. In the first place, to what extent do we find contexts of the future: *bhavissati*, where we can allow that mere recurrence is implied, with inattention to any 'becoming' or coming to be?

There are such contexts. Taking the Four Collections in order, they meet us already in the first Suttanta. We find the *bhū*-future used twelve times

in one short paragraph: "There will be marching out of rajas . . . marching back . . . attacking . . . retreating . . . winning . . . losing; thus to the one there will . . . *bhū* . . . victory, to the other there will . . . *bhū* . . . defeat." Here in the first ten *bhū*-futures, I would say, the augur's prediction is a statement of occurrence, in the last two it is one of result; or perhaps I should say: the first eight and the last four. The result of the campaigns is certainly a result arising out of future military activities. By the translator<sup>1</sup> only the verb 'to be' is used, but I should have no quarrel with any translators had its use been limited to such general statements as these. This is, however, not the case. A few pages later we have the *bhū*-future not only not translated as 'will be,' we have it rendered "will have such and such results"; and further the resulting knowledge in a given man making him the wise man he is, is rendered: "He knows that such opinions will become such as have (for him) such a destiny, such a (life) hereafter."

Here we have not just occurrence, but the future estimated in terms of value, that is, of the better or worse. And here it is, that translators usually evade this meaning that is, that must, lie here in *bhavissanti*, and fall back on 'will have.' The reader of English or of German passes on, and for him the real significance in the Pali verb is lost.

Another case, where the 'will be' of mere occurrence in future seems at first sight an adequate rendering, reveals to more careful scrutiny, that in religion we oftener deal with a 'will become' that matters, rather than with the mere maintenance that is suggested by just repetition or happening in future. No. 16 of the

<sup>1</sup> Rhys Davids, *Dialogues of the Buddha*, i. 20.

*Dīgha* (the Book of the Great Passing-away), opens with a conversation between Gotama and Vassakāra, chief minister of the king of Magadha, sent to consult the former, as we see the prophets in Israel consulted: Shall we 'go up' to fight such and such a king? The venerable Master, in place of direct reply, turns to Ānanda, who fans him, and asks whether it is not common knowledge, that they who are prospectively attacked, the Vajjians, are public-spirited, foregathering often, maintainers of concord, upholders of law, honouring elders and shrines, guarding their women and supporting their religieus? To each and all Ānanda answers: Yes, he has heard as much. So long then, rejoins Gotama, is, among the Vajjians, growth (*vuddhi*) to be expected, not decline. The minister, admitting that such a people would be tough opponents in war, takes his leave. Here the *bhū*-future is used once so long as the Vajjians often assembled "will become" in great numbers—in other words, "will 'go on becoming' assembled" . . . and once again in the last of the named conditions: "so long as rightful protection, warding and care of worthy religieus shall become well carried out. . . ."

Then follows an application of this reply to the Gotamid Order: here also seven conditions, the first four being in almost, or quite the same words, monks replacing Vajjians. Here, again, the *bhū*-future is used only in the first and sixth: "so long as the monks will become intent on forest abodes."

There then follow what are probably later parallel versions—common in the Suttas, inevitable in oral Sayings—four sets of seven, and one set of six conditions, setting forth alternative things "to be expected" in religious life and outlook. In all of these

the *bhū*-future occurs as before, but now repeated in each condition, with the one interesting exception where the verb *āpajjissati*, will attain, is substituted:—  
 “so long as you monks will not attain (what seems to be) the goal through an inferior and provisional (*antara*) acquiring. . . .” That is, by mistaking an intervening lower peak for the ultimate Height. In all, the future tense of becoming is in these five sets used thirty times.

Why now, if the original message dwelt on becoming, as for me it did, does the verb ‘become’ occur relatively seldom in the first set of seven? For, whereas it is possible, that in the succeeding sets we have six not only varying, but later superposed versions of requisite conditions, it is more probable that in the first set, echoing as it does the answer given to the king’s messenger, we have the earliest, possibly the original answer, which served perhaps as model for the rest. It is a fit query.

Let us suppose that Ānanda was reborn in India in Asoka’s reign and, once more a monk, had developed the long memory of the saint, and could remember the days when he so devotedly followed his cousin the last twenty-five years of his long mission; also that Ānanda were speaking to us through a psychic medium. Can we not hear him saying something like this: Yes, I remember the messenger Vassakāra coming with that inquiry, and the questions the Master put to me. I remember, too, how he applied the answer to those of us whom he was visiting on Vulture’s Peak for the last time on that tour I took with him. *There was no need* then for him to be ever repeating the fact and the need of our ever becoming. It had been as the very breath of his teaching so many years. But when I was later

on earth, and came to Patna for the great revising, then there had been much falling away in the teaching of becoming, and in certain centres teachers had made a tradition of repeating the word over and over again, just as you find is done in those other sets of seven. Moreover, there had come *yet later* into vogue the using of the causative 'will make become': *bhāvessanti*, as it is in the fourth set of seven and the fifth. So you see, that to understand these scriptures, never written in either of these lives of mine, but only handed on orally, you must read them in the light of ever-changing values. And remember, that what is not yet written down, is more easily changed. Do you not say 'litera scripta manet'?

But let us persist in seeking cases where *bhavissati* means just 'will be.' And only one who has sought out such will know how few are such contexts.

In *Dīgha* No. 24 (p. 5) we have "I tell you that there will be talkers (*vattāro bhavissanti*," who will say, namely, things about the man addressed). Here, too, the talkers will be a result of this man's conduct, yet it would be in English forced to say 'will become talkers,' and 'will be' here hides no important use of *bhū*.

Again, the time aspects are better translated in terms of 'to be'; thus "there has not been, nor will there be, nor is there now any teacher" like you (*Dīgha*, No. 28, p. 99).

Again, foretelling a future event is accompanied either by the future of 'become,' or by its contracted present: *i.e.*, by *bhavissati* or by *hoti*. Thus *Samyutta*, XV, 2, 20 has *bhavissati so samayo*, 'that time will come (when the name of this hill will disappear . . .); and *Anguttara*, i, 178 ('Threes'), speaks of the possible

occurrence of a conflagration as *hoti so samayo*: 'there becomes. . . .' Here one cannot quarrel with translating by 'will be' or 'happens,' 'may happen.' Nevertheless, the stressing by the speakers of the coming to be and passing away of phenomena is thereby weakened.

So in *Dīgha*, No. 33, p. 256, a monk is considering: "There will be work for me to do"; in *Majjhima*, No. 8, p. 42, 44 cases are given with the refrain: "others will be harm-workers, we will not be so," etc.; in *Majjhima*, No. 86, p. 103, it is asked: "Will not that be for me deliberate lying?" and in No. 87, p. 107: "for whom will it be as you say?"; in *Majjhima*, No. 124, p. 127: "today will be my utter passing away"; and in No. 146, p. 271, "there will be a catechizing, sisters!" I could probably find a proportional sprinkling of similar contexts in the other two Collections, but will not weary the reader. All of these are cases where a future happening is not given as impending in consequence of a present or past happening, and in some of them to use the verb 'will become' would, for English idiom, be forced.

I must not omit to mention one context, where it may be claimed, that the Sutta-compilers are themselves against the view, that in the future of *bhū* anything more than what is yet to happen is meant. In the XXIInd *Samyutta*, § 62, there is a brief but pointed statement of the validity of time considered under its three aspects. I imagine that we have here but the fragment of a half forgotten discourse on perhaps the reality of causation. Past, present and future are declared to be mutually exclusive, and it is of interest to note, that the three participles for these: the gone by, the not-come and the uprisen, so often



used in the Suttas, are not mentioned. Here, of the word *bhavissati* it is said: "Whatever matter (or material thing) is unborn, unmanifested (*ajātaṃ apātubhūtaṃ*), is reckoned as 'will be,' and is so termed, so named." And the same is repeated for things of the mind. Here is no indication that 'will be' meant anything more than what 'wise men' understand as three valid modes of dividing time.

Yes, save that in the word 'born,' the whole matter of coming to be, of growth, of becoming is implied, making it less incumbent to be more explicit. But from its concluding words, it is evident, that the Saying had only exponential importance in reference to views of the day when it took fixed form, and not as inculcating anything of moment in teaching about 'being' or 'becoming.'

There is one way in the use of the *bhū*-future that requires special mention, a case where to render it by 'will become' would be more or less unfit and misleading. This is the conjectural future, an idiom perhaps more peculiar to Irish dialectic than to 'English,' as in the phrases: 'You'll be tellin' me' . . . 'surely that will be his step,' and the like, but belonging also to Sanskrit and Pali idiom. As to the former, I have as yet traced no occurrence of it in Vedas or in (older) Upanishads, let alone Brāhmaṇas. But I have found some half-dozen uses of it in the Suttas; and it is interesting, that Whitney, in his *Sanskrit Grammar*, where he gives two lines to it only, cites (p. 306), as his sole instance, a context from the Mahābhārata, apparently identical with one I shall cite from the Fourth Collection of Suttas.

Here are my half-dozen. In *Dīgha*, No. IX, p. 180, a travelling student Poṭṭhapāda is discussing with the

Founder questions of the new psychology. Does trance supervene when the very man or soul (*viññāna*) of his own will leaves the body, or when religious of mighty will will him to leave it, or when devas do so?<sup>1</sup> In all three cases the student has concluded: “Nay, that will never be the case”: in Pali, *na kho nām’etam evaṃ bhavissati*. Actually we have here a coming to be, but we are in the region of conjecture, and I should not find the use of ‘be the case’ unfit.

In *Samyutta*, No. XI, 2, 3, we have a lay disciple asking the Founder, had he ever seen Sakka (governor of the next world)? To the reply ‘Yes,’ he says: “Was that perhaps someone who will be like Sakka; surely Sakka is hard to see?” Then in *ibid.*, 3, 2, is a legend about a yakkha impersonating Sakka and exercising harmful influence on devas. These ask Sakka: “Will this, sire, be a choleric-natured yakkha?” In *ibid.*, XXII, § 86, travelling students jeer at a saying of the disciple Anurādhā: “This monk will be a novice . . . or an ignorant fool.” In *ibid.*, XLII, § 7, a farmer in conversation with the Founder about the reception of the latter’s teaching, illustrated by homely similes, admits that “such water might do (*bhavissati*) for washpans.”

I come finally to two contexts in the Fourth Collection, where we translators have not been of one mind, whether a conjectural future is meant. These are in the Fours and Fives. Of the *latter* (A. iii, 75), I only came to see the Commentary last year (1936), in Dr. Kopp’s ed. (Pali Text Society), and find, I am glad to say, that the *bhū*-future: *bhavissanti* is equated by *vaddhissanti*, ‘will flourish’ or grow, just as we saw

<sup>1</sup> By an oversight in *Dialogues of the Buddha*, the third alternative has been omitted.

the Commentary on the *Dīgha* equating the word *bhava* (above, p. 52) with *vuddhi*. In the context mentioned just above (p. 96), Mahāli of the Licchavis, a branch of the Vajjian confederation, watches a hunting-party of his countrymen reverently saluting the Founder, and exclaims twice “with bated breath,” “They’ll be (or become) Vajjians!” He explains his saying so to Gotama by apologizing for the rough coarse ways of his countrymen, as usually the reverse of their present behaviour. Now this might be taken as a conjectural future: ‘Why! they might be Vajjians,’ *i.e.* like the more cultured oligarchy of the Vajjians. As if, in the ancient Italian countryside he had said: Why, one would take them for Roman citizens!

Somewhat in this fashion the German translator takes the meaning;<sup>1</sup> he puts “Heil den Vajjiern!” twice (he wrote in pre-Hitler days), and for “bated breath” has ‘stieß den Ruf aus’ ‘raised the shout.’ E. M. Hare (P.T.S.) has “They will become Vajjians!” That is, as in the footnote, ‘they will end by becoming Vajjians,’ behaving thus. I believe, I am partly responsible for this rendering, and defend it in my Introduction, with the remark I have since found to be incorrect, that the colloquial conjectural future was not traceable in Pali idiom. I am sorry for this mistake; at the same time I confess, that, what with the Commentator’s “The Vajjians will grow,” like the cry *Floreat Etona!*, the German’s ‘Heil’ and the colloquial conjectural, I am not really sure which way is the more correct. Fortunately, it doesn’t much matter.

The other context does matter. It is in *Anguttara*

<sup>1</sup> *Reden des Buddha*, by ‘Nyanatiloka.’

(Fours), ii, 35, the Sutta called by the Magadhi form 'Worlds' (*loke*). It begins with a legendary streak. A brahman, Doṇa, sees in the dust human footprints with the wheels, one of the marks of the 'superman,' world-conqueror, or world-helper. They lead him where Gotama is seated beneath a tree, absorbed, radiant, "like a tamed alert well trained elephant." He asks him four questions: *Devo no bhavam bhavissatīti?*<sup>1</sup> "Will the gentleman . . . a deva?" Answer: "I shall not . . . brahman, a deva." Doṇa substitutes 'a gandharva,' 'a yaksha,' a human being (or man of earth; *manusso*), with a like negative result. I have left . . . blanks for us to choose, whether for us the conjectural or the *bhū*-future is the more correct rendering. Our German translator, as we have reason to expect, makes no use of his verb *werden* 'become,' but has recourse to quite a number of ingenious evasions of the *bhū*-form. Starting with Doṇa's conjecture: "These will not 'be' (*bhavissanti*) human footprints," by the rendering: "These cannot be . . .," he puts the four questions, which are in Pali austere in the same framework, thus: questions 1, 2, 3, have the verb:

Sollte der Herr nicht wohl gar ein Gott sein ?  
 Oder sollte der Herr nicht etwa ein Geist sein ?  
 Sollte dann etwa der Herr ein Gespenst (!) sein ?

that is, won't the gentleman be, or mightn't he be . . .  
 and question 4 has

Dann ist wohl der Herr ein Mensch ?

Here is much variety in odd contrast to the Pali simplicity. The English translator, E. M. Hare, has,

<sup>1</sup> *No* here means, not 'for us,' but *nu*, the interrogative particle. A *v.l.* has *nu*.

on the contrary, the Pali simplicity, and moreover he rejects the conjectural device and gives us: “Your worship will become a deva. . . ?” so for the other questions: gandharva, yakkha, a human being. Which comes nearer the truth ?

I hold the latter does, and this time I am not in doubt. This is *because of the context*, which determines the purpose of the questionnaire much more clearly than does that of the former sutta. In the first place, the answer, if the first translation were right would be: *n’asmi devo*, ‘I am not a deva.’ But it is: ‘I shall not become a deva (*bhavissāmi*)’—here the German responds to this, albeit still evading, by ‘I am not destined (*bestimmt*) to be a deva.’ But according to his own preceding rendering, the question has nothing to do with destiny, but with present existence. In the second place, the fuller response ascribed to the Founder after the four questions is entirely concerned with destiny. It runs thus: had I not finished my growth out of imperfections, I should become, *i.e.* be reborn as, any one of those four kinds of beings. But just as a lotus in full bloom above the water is unsoiled by immersion, so am I unsoiled in the world. Take it, brahman, that I am purified.

Here is a reply which compels a faithful translator to use, for the future of *bhū*, ‘will become,’ a use which, as I have said, is the one consistency apparent in all translators in the Upanishads:—the use of ‘become’ when it is a question of a man’s hereafter.<sup>1</sup> That Gotama ever claimed to have finished his growth I do not believe; he was too wise to do that,

<sup>1</sup> With the liberty of using *suddho*, ‘purified’ for the *buddho* of the text, I have dealt in a note in the *J.R.A.S.*, 1933, entitled ‘Buddho or Suddho?’

albeit I can bring no text wherein he disclaims being perfect. Omniscience he clearly repudiates, as I have pointed out (*Majjhima*, No. 7).<sup>1</sup> But the aftermen, revolting from that immanent Deity or Self, to whom he pointed men, had to make of him in their orphaned world a God supreme. And it is consistent with that pious deification of him to hold, that for him there would be no more 'becoming' in any *bhava* (life or world).

The lines that follow the prose, in Sutta fashion, make the reference to rebirth yet clearer:

The āsavas whereby would be  
A deva-birth or airy sprite,  
Gandharva, or whereby myself  
Would reach the state of yakkhahood,  
Or go to birth in human womb——  
Those āsavas now for myself  
Are slain destroyed and rooted out, etc.

I have here followed Mr. Hare's translation 'would be,' not 'would become,' although I have just claimed consistency in the latter usage in such a connection for all translators, more or less. But here is an amusing exception, loyally followed by Mr. Hare. The Pali versifier has also got 'would be': *assa*. As with the former, *metri causa* has constrained:

*Yena devupapatty'assa gandhabbo va vihangamo.*

But be it noted that the Commentary seeks to make good by paraphrasing *assa* with *bhaveyya*: might become.

Let us now come at length to samples—they are too numerous to give more—of cases where for me

<sup>1</sup> "I have heard it said that Gotama is all-knowing . . . is this witness true?" "The witness is not true, it imputes to me what is false."

there should be more certainly translation by the word 'will become,' not by 'will be.' These abound in all four Nikāyas.

In *Samyutta*, I, § 6, I rendered the half-line: *katham yātra bhavissati* by 'how shall there egress be?' Strictly this is a case of coming-to-be; it is perhaps, *metri causa*, pardonable, and anyway not misleading. Similar in every way is the half-line: *vasago te bhavissati* (*ibid.* iv, 3, 5): 'he shall vassal be to thee.' And when 'shall' takes the place of 'will' something of a making-come-to-be is implied. In the phrase: 'this will long come to be for your unhappiness, or, again, for your happiness—a phrase recurring often in the Suttas—this rendering is doubtless clumsier English than 'will long be' or 'long make for,' yet I repeat, that the lesson of what the man 'becomes,' because of what he is now doing, is, in the usual rendering, less driven home. It is not so much the events themselves on which the giving heed is set; the deed  $x$ , the result  $y$ ; it is the man himself, ever in a state of becoming who, in the Indian idiom, is brought into high relief.

Once more, take *Samyutta*, XXII, § 87, where the Founder is shown sending a message of comfort to a devoted disciple lying ill, because of what he, the former, had just heard psychically:—"fear not, Vakkali . . . your dying will not be evil. . . ." Actually the Pali is "will not become . . ." since the man's life would have a happy result. But again, the translator's preference of the English idiom as less clumsy is to be condoned. Yet more so in such a phrase as "and for me a holy day will become kept-holy"—"*uposatho me upavuttho bhavissati*" (*Anguttara*, iv, 388), legitimately rendered by 'I shall keep.' And

in the saying (*Anguttara* ii, 198, 'Fours'): when I die all my experiences here will become cold (or cool: *sītibhavissanti*), the translator has used not a weaker, but if anything a stronger rendering in 'grow cold.'

For that matter there is among us translators anything but consistency in slighting the Pali insistence on becoming in the future of *bhū*. Here, for instance, is a case (*Anguttara*, iv. 22 f., 'Sevens') where in Sutta 22, we are given 'shall not' this and that, and in Sutta 23, in a similar estimate, 'shall become' this and that. The Sayings here are a repetition of the interview about the Vajjians mentioned in this chapter, and the applied seven cases in the safety and progress of the Order. Again, the translator's apparent capriciousness is due to ways of English as opposed to Pali idiom. Thus, in many Suttas the latter idiom is to *stress the man* as agent in his will and his becoming-more-in-willing; in the English, the outlook is more away from the man and on to things that men do. So it comes that, in 22, we have in Indian idiom: so long as the monks shall not become delighters-in-business (lit. action), -in-sloth, -in-society, etc.; in English idiom, shall not delight in action, etc. In 23, the structure in Pali is the same: so long as the monks shall become full-of-faith, and other virtues expressed as adjectives with the agent-affixes *-mant*, etc. But *here* it is less clumsy to use corresponding English adjectives, and so we are given, as less clumsy, the truer rendering: shall become conscientious . . . become great listeners, etc.

This adapting himself of the translator to what makes more comfortable English, when he is confronted with these ever recurring *bhū*-futures, aided as he is by the knowledge, that the same word in the text



has to serve for 'will be' and 'will become,' and unaided as he usually is by the conviction (which is mine) of the current high significance in religion of man as more rightly a 'becomer,' than a 'being,' results in an ever-varying selection of words used in translating *bhū*-forms, and especially in these future forms. One thing I have noticed, not without satisfaction, namely, that the Pali Text Society's translations published in this decade, and these are no less than six volumes of Suttas, show a greater effort to use 'will become' for *bhavissati*, than such as were published earlier. We have only to compare these with the translations of the first two Collections issued prior to that period,<sup>1</sup> wherein there would at times seem almost to be a will to avoid the use of any form of 'become.' Only readers who have gone through these with text and translation side by side will agree that the appearance at least is there.

If now I turn back to the concordance I have jotted down of all occurrences of *bhū*-forms in the Suttas, the *bhū*-futures forming by far the longest lists, it is striking to note how large, relatively to the mere-occurrence-contexts, are the phrases where the future means clearly not just what will follow, but what will be the issue, the result, the coming-to-be-because-of this or that. I will group a few samples of all these.

With the *bhū*-future referring to rebirth, coupled with the equally frequent use here of the present, *bhavati*, I have dealt already.

In the next place there is much use of the *bhū*-future where man is considering what will or may come to pass, not, as in our idiom, as what will happen, or as what he will do, but as what will, for him, come to

<sup>1</sup> 1900-21; 1922-37.

be, as a reshaping in his worldly life. Thus, in Pali idiom, we get such phrases as “ Just as a trader going about his trade (says): ‘ Whence for me this will come to be, by that I shall gain.’ ”<sup>1</sup> Naturally enough, the translator has: ‘ reckons that he will make so much out of this and get so much by that,’ whereby the outlook is shifted from the ‘ coming to be for me ’ to the ‘ me bringing it about.’ Unhappily, the little simile is illustrating the natural desire of men for a future life and a desirable one. And there, of course, we get the *bhū*-future: ‘ Thus having gone on shall we hereafter become ’ (*iti pecca bhavissāma*). And here the usually consistent use of ‘ become ’ which we need is in less natural succession to the merchant’s ‘ what he will make out of it.’ Accordingly, the translation evades entirely any attempt at literal rendering.

Next, there are often contexts about not material but immaterial estimates. Such as, “ if you hear them slandered say: my mind shall not become upset (or changed). ”<sup>2</sup> Again, a sick man is admonished: “ train yourself thus: my soul (lit. for me the soul) will not become hanging on objects of sense, nor on ideas of sense ”<sup>3</sup> and so on, the word *bhavissati* being repeated sixteen times. Similarly: “ (resolve:) ‘ keen shall become our desire in the higher training.’ ”<sup>4</sup> “ Inwardly for me the mind shall become stable, well-composed, ”<sup>5</sup> and many more contexts of this kind. Here the translator would, if English or French, be more likely to put ‘ be ’ than ‘ become ’; were he German he is pretty safe; thus in the first of these contexts, Neumann:—*nicht soll mein Gemüth verstört werden*; Lord Chalmers, who is incorrigibly persistent

<sup>1</sup> *M.* ii. 232 (No. 102).

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 143.

<sup>4</sup> *A.* i. 229.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 21.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, iv. 299.

in evading the use of 'become' has 'be'; Mr. Hare, very much the reverse, has, in the third, 'become.'

Thus we have so far three groups of cases, where the future is viewed not so much as just an impending change—as it tends to be if 'be' is used for 'become,' not to speak of renderings that evade—but rather as a change in a man's life for the better or the worse, for growth or for decline. In the first group, the change from one life to another is in religion emphatically this and, I repeat, the use here of 'become' has forced itself on the English translator. In the second group he tends to evade using 'become'; it is regrettable, but here we are not so often on religious ground. It is in the third group that we are again on religious ground, and namely on that region of it, which is the very soul and essence of the Buddhist gospel: the carrying religion into every day and hour of life; the becoming ever a More in wayfaring towards a Most.

Over and over again recurs the injunction: "thus and thus are you to train yourselves: we will become *x, y, z.*" And here it is that we sorely need more conscientious translating. Mr. Hare's work alone comes out herein all but 'up to scratch,' and he is not far ahead of Mr. Woodward. Let the reader, for instance, take up the volume in which the latter has crowned his fine work on the Third and Fourth Collections, the fifth of *Anguttara* or *Gradual Sayings*, and see how the ardent zeal for growth and becoming is brought out in faithful rendering—*e.g.*, in *The Brahma-moods*, p. 194. It is true that even by him our *bhū*-forms have to give way to the word 'grow,' but that leaves me relatively happy, so near for India were the two words—as, indeed, we have seen. Here is a specimen: "He comes to know thus: Formerly

this heart of mine was confined, it was not made to grow, but now my heart is boundless, well made to grow. Moreover, whatsoever deed belongs to a limited range, now it stays not in that range, it stands not still in that range. . . . Indeed this heart's release by amity must be made to grow whether by a woman or by a man. . . ." Here the text has, literally: "this heart . . . became not made to become . . . now . . . well made to become," etc.

Now take a rendering of one of those injunctions in training by a different hand, in No. 39 of the *Majjhima*, where literally the Pali runs thus: ". . . thus shall our monkhood become real and our profession a fact (*bhūta*, lit. thing become), our actions will become very fruitful and our leaving the world will become not sterile . . . verily thus should be the training . . ." and so on. Here in some eighteen lines we have five uses of the verb *bhū*, yet in every case the translator uses some other word, yes, five different words. Very elegant English it makes, showing us matured verbal evolution of this continent and this age, but where in it is ancient India feeling out after her new ideal, seated

*upon the skirts of Time . . . sowing the To Be ?*

The heart and secret of that gospel has been veiled. How many English readers, fed on Buddhism through such a cuisine, can possibly get at its real original essence ?

I come finally to a use of the *bhū*-future, the meaning of which I have for some time held in the scales, and have only this year become sure that the meaning I imputed was right. I have discussed the subject the last six years, but I may as well repeat here what I first said about it at Leiden in 1931.<sup>1</sup> Before Gotama

<sup>1</sup> Printed in *J.R.A.S.*, 1932 (January).

began his long life-mission, he is recorded to have hesitated whether he should begin. Then he is said to have had a vision, of which he, being at the time alone, can alone have told. A deva appeared, humbly greeting, and urged him to teach. Men are in a decline (*parihāyanti*), he said, but *bhavissanti dhammassa aññātāro*. This we all, myself included, have translated as “there will be they who understand the teaching (*dhamma*).” I came to see, that *aññātāro* meant, not so much understanders, knowers, as learners, the verb *ā-ññā* being ‘coming-to-know,’ *er-kennen*. This, if it did not go far, lent a present interest to what he might do rather than to results more remote. But, it came to me further, did *bhavissanti* serve merely as copula to ‘learners’? Was it possibly the contrary, the alternative, to *parihāyanti*? Were there not many contexts in the suttas contrasting *parihāni* and *vuddhi*: decline and growth? Was it not possibly the forerunner of a gospel wherein the main thing to be sought was, not the contrast ‘ill’ (*dukkha*) and ‘end of ill’ (*dukkhanta*) of the formula, but man’s growth, man’s becoming, and so man’s salvation? Was there not here an expansion of the idea in the current teaching of that day: That ‘art’ thou? Was it not truer to say of man That art thou becoming?

But there was the difficulty about ‘becoming’ being here taken to be no mere copula: ‘will become  $x$  or  $y$ .’ And I was told: No, there are no cases save of the copula. Then I turned to the Upanishads. Did we not there find the phrases: *kva tadā puruṣo bhavati?* “where then does the man (soul) come-to-be?” And “how, death ahead, does the soul come-to be (*bhavati*)?” Here was no mere copula requiring ‘man’

to become  $x$  or  $y$ ; here 'become' was a finite verb in itself, that could be set over dying or the like of the body. Why, then, should not the future serve equally as finite verb? But so it did, and very blind had I been to have forgotten work of translating of fifteen years ago. For example, in *Samyutta* XII, § 20: "Shall I become at some future time, or shall I not become (*bhavissāmi*)?" And other contexts beside this. So now I am sure, that the keynote of the new word in Buddhism was struck in that vision, and that the picture of the lotuses at every stage of growth, 'just like men,' is the fit sequel to this keynote of the need of becoming or growth, and not to the something else, in the monastic teaching, which has wrongly been laid upon his shoulders.

But how all this evasion of, this reluctance to use, the word 'become' has blinded readers to the real truth about this great man and his New Word! His long mission was inspired by the promise, that if he taught, men would not worsen but *become*, that is, grow. He ended that mission with his own promise, that where there was the will (*kāma*) to train, with the divine self, the divine inner monitor, lighting and warding him, man would *become* the topmost peak of that undying, that immortality. And first and last, the two promises have been obscured for readers by that evasion, that reluctance.

I have said how the former promise is obscured; my reading is not followed—not yet. Here is how the latter promise is obscured. "Whoever, Ānanda, either now, or when I have passed away, shall live having the self as lamp, dharma as lamp, having these as refuge and no other, they shall become that highest

in the Immortal, if they will to train.” That ‘highest in the Immortal’ in Pali is *tamatagge bhavissanti*. In the compound I see the emphatic *ta*, the word *amata*—that which earnest men like Sāriputta and Moggallāna said, we read, they were seeking when they came to Gotama—and the word *agga*,<sup>1</sup> highest, the Greek *akra*. Now this had been so lost to view for the later editors that, if we are to believe the Commentary, they saw in *t'amata* only the one word *tamas*, darkness. The exegesis namely reads: “the *t* connects *tama* and *agga*; thus having cut off the stream of darkness my disciples will become exceedingly *agge*: uttermost being.” Now this is an impossible paraphrase; the correct way in this elucidation would be of a compound: *agga-tama-chedanakā*, or some such agent-word meaning ‘cutter off’—namely, of darkness from the top. And it is a testimony to the youthful crudeness of our Pali research, that we have so long let pass this Commentarial crudity. Only Oldenberg shakes his head: “solche Jünger werden mir auf der Höhe stehen,” he translates, but adds below: “Translation here uncertain.”<sup>2</sup> Rhys Davids, also evading the ‘will become,’ has “shall reach the very topmost height”; he adds the exegetical citation I also give, but seems in no doubt about the plausibility of that explanation.<sup>3</sup> Franke has “werden die höchsten heissen”; he at least is not so evasive with his ‘werden,’ but seems to think the odd compound requires no explanation.<sup>4</sup> Woodward is alas! evasive as to ‘become,’ but has a careful footnote on the compound, without rejecting it as palpably corrupt, or coming to any such conclusion

<sup>1</sup> *Agge* will be a surviving Magadhese nominative.

<sup>2</sup> *Buddha*, 6th ed., p. 223.

<sup>3</sup> *Dialogues*, ii. 109.

<sup>4</sup> *Dīgha-Nikāya*, 204.

as I did four years after his translation of it, as given in *Samyutta* v (XLVII, § 3; i, 9), appeared.<sup>1</sup>

I am left not a little wondering at the failure of one and all of us (save myself only three years ago) to reject the funny compound as impossible. I admit that the word for darkness: *tamas*, plays a part in the Suttas, as a figure for spiritual ignorance or bewilderment, being contrasted with *āloka* (*Majjhima*) and *joti* (*Samyutta* and *Anguttara*): 'light' = wisdom. And there is a line of verse, inserted in the versions of the scene of the Founder's hesitation to become a missionary, inserted no one knows at what date:

. . . *na dakkhinti tamokkhandhena āvatā* :  
'they'll never see, muffled in mass of dark.'

But the compound *tamokkhandha* is but one of many such compounds: mass of, body of, and is in no way forced, as is 'dark' with 'height.' The P.T.S. Pali Dictionary accepts the odd compound, as paralleled by a Sanskrit phrase: *tamaḥ pāre*, 'beyond the dark,' the source, with date, of this parallel not being given. But *pāra* was there in Pali also, often used as a spiritual figure, not forced as is *tamas* with *agga*. It *could* have been used; the parallel leaves me unsatisfied.<sup>2</sup>

But neither of these two words is my subject. My point is that, with the precedent of Indian pre-Buddhist teaching before them, of man's attaining life's consummation by "becoming Brahman," and the agree-

<sup>1</sup> Woodward slightly misunderstands Rh. D. in disagreeing that the last clause "anxious to learn ('anxious' is not correct) was added afterwards." Rh. D.'s "seems to have been an afterthought" refers to the speaker's thought (which is equally untenable).

<sup>2</sup> I shall not be yet on earth when the Copenhagen Critical Pali Dictionary reaches the word *tama-*, but I know that its senior editor rejects my rendering.



ment of translators, here at least, to render *bhavati* by becomes—an agreement which, on the whole, is repeated in Sutta translations—there should have been no want of agreement here to render *bhavissanti* by ‘will become.’ Instead of which the agreement has lain in a common avoidance of this rendering!

It is fit that this chapter close with those impressive last words of the great Helper, since in them he—it is probably a faithful tradition—has linked *bhavissanti* with *kāma*: ‘will become’ with ‘will.’ I say ‘will’ rather than ‘desire,’ for be it remembered, that there was little in the sixth century B.C. in India of that worsening of *kāma* which is plain enough in later Upanishad and Sutta, reducing this strong word to mere sensuous, nay, to sensual desire. It was then applicable even to Deity as Creator. “So (the divine self) *akāmayata*: desired: may to me a second soul be born!” Man in his becoming is willing the better; this is his Way; therein he is free to wayfare further; and he does so wayfare, else had he never got beyond the primitive creature he once was. Become he must, even if he bring not will to bear on his becoming; if he do not, then will his ‘becoming’ become felt in a rough-hewing fraught with much anguish and misery, when, in the Gotamic phrase, it might have been “attaining happiness by happy means.”

It was a great, a noble viaticum to leave with men after long years of loving care: that if they will, they can become that Most, Whom here they can but know as a More.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE VERB *BHŪ* AND THE PAST

#### *A. The Finite Forms.*

WE are here as to materials in a different position: there were in early India forms both of *as* and of *bhū* to express things gone by. We find both *āsim*, I was, and *ahum*, I became, with the other person-forms. And the question at once arises: are the two verbs used indifferently to express the past, or do we find, that the *bhū*-form is only used, when the past is reckoned as a giving way to something new, whether better or worse?

Now, in the absence, alas! of a Concordance, I speak with caution and reserve; but so far I would reply, firstly, that the two are used indifferently; secondly, that the *as*-form is much rarer than the *bhū*-form, is in fact, very seldom met with; thirdly, that as yet I have only found the *as*-form of the past (as finite tense) in metric passages, where it looks as if the bisyllable *āsi(m)* scanned better than the trisyllable *ahosi*, 'became.'

Thus, in Sutta-Nipāta, verse 284 and 994:

and *Isayo pubbakā āsum . . .*  
*Sok' assa tanuko āsi . . .*  
( ' There were rishis in the past . . . ' )  
( ' His grief became slight . . . ' )

we have the past of *as* used, first for a statement of what was, secondly, as a result of a cause, happiness, namely, because of good news.

Then in the Suttas, in *e.g.*, *Majjhima*, No. 50:

*Kīdiso nirayo āsi yattha Dūsī apaccatha ?*  
What like was hell where Dūsī burned ?

and *Majjhima*, No. 65:

*Appakā kho tumhe tena samayena ahuvattha . . .*  
( ' There were but few of you at that time . . . ' )

and *Majjhima*, No. 25:

*Appamattā samānā na yathākāmakaraṇīyā bhavissāma . . .*  
*te . . . na yathākāmakaraṇīyā ahesum nevāpikassa . . .*  
( Being careful let us not become at the mercy . . . they  
. . . did not become at the mercy of the gamekeeper . . . )

where we have the past of *bhū* used in the first two clauses for a statement of ' what was, ' and, in the third, as a result of a cause: safety, namely, because of carefulness. Be it noted, too, in the third, that the past tense of *bhū* agrees with the future of *bhū*; the latter *had* to be used, but for the former, there was to hand the word ' were, ' *āsiṃ*, or *āsiṃsu*.

Here the English translator, indifferent as to the notion of ' becoming, ' condenses greatly, evading any use of the word. The German translator, albeit also uninterested, as a rule, in making *bhū*-forms apparent, is so repetitive, that no reader can fail to be struck with the emphasis on becoming.

Chalmers: " . . . resolved to browse with circumspection and without losing their heads and without getting off their guard, so as not to be at the trapper's mercy. And this they did . . . "

Neumann: " Wie wenn wir nun eine Stätte aufsuchten . . . nicht blindlings geniessend werden wir nicht behaglich werden; nicht behaglich geworden, werden wir uns nicht gehn lassen, und . . . werden wir . . . dem Gefallen des Wildstellers nicht uberliefert sein. "

Five times is the *bhū*-verb here used as against total omission in the English version.

These citations illustrate also my third point, that the past tense of *as* is found in verse rather than in prose. Here are other contexts:

*Kāyena saññato āsim* . . . (I was restrained in deed . . .)  
 . . . *pharusā c'āsim issukī* . . . (I was violent and en-  
 vious . . .)  
*Sahayānaṃ samayo āsi* . . . (You had intercourse with  
 friends . . .)  
*tvañca āmantitā āsi* . . . (and you were summoned . . .)  
*Petavatthu* (I, 2; 3, 4; II, 13: all verses).

It is perhaps worth noting, that the Commentary equates *āsi* with *ahosi* in the first two of these three. This may indicate, that, when the exegesis took its final form in writing, there had ceased to be any different meaning in *āsi* and *ahosi*. It does not follow, that 1,000 years earlier there had, in north India, been no difference.<sup>1</sup>

And I am not saying, that the past in *as* monopolized usage in verse. We have, in *Anguttara* iv, 89, these lines:

. . . *suññam Brahmupago ahuṃ,*  
*sattakkhattuṃ devindo devarajjaṃ Vasavattī tadā ahuṃ.*  
 (. . . I became acquirer of the vacant Brahmā[-ship].  
 Seven times I then became the chief Brahmā Vasavattī,)

with two more such references. It is also of interest to note, that after these, when the historic present is used, the word is, not *asmi*, I am (*i.e.*, was), but *homi*, I become.

. . . *rājā homi patāpavā.*  
 (I became king, squire of the earth.)

I have as yet found but two uses in prose of the *as*-past tense, found them guided by the Copenhagen

<sup>1</sup> Other contexts in verse are *Dīgha* ii. 236; *Tad'āsuṃ satta Bhāratā* (*v.l. bhātaro*), and *Cariyā-piṭaka*, iv. 1: *Kusāvatiṃhi nagare yadā āsi mahāpati*.

Dictionary. One is in the elaborated formula appended to the original formula of recollection of former lives:

*Tatrāp'āsim evaṃnāmo evaṃgotto, etc.*

(Then, too, I was of such a name, such a clan, etc.)

The other is in *Majjhima*, No. 71: where Gotama is shown making out a poor case for asceticism, admitting out of his long memories only one case where an ascetic 'went to heaven,' and *he* saw the true worth in conduct as pregnant of result:

*so p'āsi kammavādī kiriyāvādī.*

There may, of course, be here and there other contexts; my point is, that in the great majority of contexts using the past tense, the verb used is *ahosi*, 'became,' not *āsi*, 'was.' And however it became a matter of undiscerned difference in later centuries which of the two was used, however much the fact of 'became' ceased to be more vital than that of 'was,' I contend, this was not necessarily the case *when*, in the oral teaching, the preference for the *bhū*-form over the *as*-form was so markedly shown. Both verbs were to hand; usually the one was chosen, not the other.

My conviction, slowly growing in force, that the very essence of the original gospel committed to Gotama as a seeing the man in a state, not of being That but of becoming That, is strengthened when I see this preference, else so uncalled-for. When, in the matter of religion, man dwells on his past, that past is no mere recalling of just happenings; it is a review of his growth. 'I was so and so then because of what I had done or failed to do'; 'I am so and so now because of what I did or failed to do in the past.' In some tongues he may use some such word as growth, or better and worse; in these dialects of old India he

had had teachers who spoke of past and present as what he was becoming; the very past itself was spoken of as 'what-has-become,' it was *after their day* that India came to say, for the past, *atīta*; the 'gone-by.' We dwell much now-a-days on our growth, our development, our evolution, meaning thereby chiefly change in bodily and mental fitness. Well, here in India was a culture that dwelt, in the word 'become,' on the growth of the very Man, self, soul, spirit. The nearest we get to that is to speak of growth of character. But character is rightly the impress we leave on our surroundings, our 'world,' by our life; it is not 'we.' The old Indian was wiser; in that sixth century B.C. he had come to see, that it was not impress or growth in this or that of us that mattered most; it was the grower, the becomer, the man. And we need to get his truer perspective, and to see, in our past and our future, what *we* had become and were becoming and will become.

### *B. The Past Participle.*

No form of the verb *bhū* occurs oftener in the Piṭakas than this, the word *bhūta*: 'become,' 'geworden,' nor one that has accumulated so many shades of meaning. Buddhaghosa, commenting on its appearance as verbal noun in that curious intruder, the first Sutta in the *Majjhima*, gives seven meanings,<sup>1</sup>—namely, (1) as referring to the five aggregates (of body and mind; his degenerate philosophy had come to see in these the 'man,' in the teeth of the Founder's warning), (2) non-human beings (3) elements: earth, air, etc., (4) something as existing—*e.g.*, a certain rule,

<sup>1</sup> Given in Rhys Davids and Stede, *Pali Dictionary*.

(5) an arahān, (6) beings inclusively, (7) vegetable growth—*i.e.*, in the compound *bhūtagāma*. Here it is only in (5) that we find implicit the notion of ‘has become’; our outlook on such a word as *bhūta* as being part of a verb *bhū*, does not seem to occur to him. For his age (fifth century A.D.) *bhūta* was just a noun, a word (*saddo*, lit. sound) among other words. But under (5), he cites a Jātaka verse (No. 245):

*Kālo ghasati bhūtāni sabbān'eva sah' attanā.  
yo ca kālaghaso bhūto sa bhūtapācanam paci.*

Time consumes what-has-become, even all with itself.

But he who has become time-consumer, he has digested a digestion of what has become.

Consumer of all that time has brought, or might bring to him amounts to the ‘worthy,’ the finished man, the arahān. Thus in one pair of lines the ‘universe’ of becoming, as at once occurrence-in-change and growth out of that, is included. From all seven we can see, that *bhūta* had ‘become,’ *for this later Buddhism*, much more a noun than a verb.

For my purpose it is enough to see, not seven, but two shades of meaning in *bhūta*: the thing that has become, and the fact of having become. One thing for me is clear: ‘having become’ is a more accurate translation for *bhūta* than ‘having been.’ This is not because the verb *as* here is to seek, as in the future tense. It is because everywhere, in the Suttas, we are concerned in a very intimate way with the causal relation between a man’s past and his present, between his past and his future, so that his line of life, his *santāna*, is revealed as including all three. In Bergson’s haunting phrase, we see his past bending over his present, let alone what is to come.

Even when the Pali speaks of what is true or fact, the

more usual way, albeit there are several words for this, is to call it *bhūta*, 'what has become.' And the more emphatic assertion of truth in a saying or view is to call it *yathābhūta*: 'according-as-it-has-become'; a term which runs like a blue thread through the Suttas of the Third and Fourth Collections, but which is all but non-existent in earlier literature.<sup>1</sup> Thus *bhūta*, used in this sense, is often equated with *taccha* (*tatya*), literally 'thatness,' *i.e.* true: "such and such is *bhūtaṃ*, is *tacchaṃ*, it is among us, it *exists* among us."<sup>2</sup> Or with *sacca*, 'true or real': "thus our life-in-orders will become real, our vows a fact:"<sup>3</sup> or, as often, alone: "I will speak according to *bhūta*, not according to *abhūta*,"<sup>4</sup> and a truth-speaker is often called *bhūtavādī*, a liar: *abhūtavādī*. Thus Gotama is shown saying: "they who say I am omniscient . . . misrepresent me heedless and by a lie";<sup>5</sup> and again: "the Wayfarer putting away idle talk became one who spoke according to fact (*bhūtavādī ahoṣi*)."<sup>6</sup>

So far and so much as to the *fact* of having become. As *things* that have become, *bhūta* is found meaning all that we now call 'creatures.' Buddhaghosa, indeed, in the reference just given, equates it with *sattā*, 'beings.' Yet in the Sutta he comments on, the beings termed *devas* are mentioned separately. For our

<sup>1</sup> Böthlingk and Roth give one context from the Mahābhārata; Bloomfield's Concordance gives none. The later Atharva-Veda approximates to the compound in a mantra against fear: *yathā bhūtañca bhavyañca* . . . 'as past and future do not fear, so, my life, fear not!'

<sup>2</sup> "Iti p'etaṃ bhūtaṃ, iti p'etaṃ tacchaṃ, atthi c'etaṃ amhesu, samvijjati ca paṇ'etaṃ amhesu." *Dīgha*, I, 3.

<sup>3</sup> *Evam no ayam amhākaṃ sāmāññā ca saccā bhavissati patiññā ca bhūtā.* *Majjhima*, No. 39.

<sup>4</sup> *Anguttara*, iii. 196.

<sup>5</sup> *Majjhima*, No. 71.

<sup>6</sup> *Dīgha*, iii. 175.



present purpose the margin of inclusion here is irrelevant, or I might pause over the use of the word for sprite, bogey or demon. Or even for a proper name. Such we find in the verses ascribed to a monk called Bhūta, in the Theragāthā Anthology.<sup>1</sup> It is told that this man was sole survivor of children devoured by a hostile 'yakkha' (was this man-eating tiger, or epidemic?), and was called Bhūta, thus compelling the propitiation of such creatures by making them sponsors. Whatever else he did not do, he gave us the sweetest verses in the whole Anthology.

Or we might speak of the use of *bhūta* for the four elements: earth, water, fire, air, called among elements 'chief' (*mahā-*). Or of the Piṭaka compound in these meanings *sabba-pāna-bhūtā*, 'all breather-creatures,' with whom the good man was to feel sympathy.

I am not stressing the possibility that 'things-that-have-become' being used instead of *sattā*: 'things that are,' implies an ever-present concern with becoming rather than being in the minds of the users. But the fact remains, that for 'things which are existent' or 'have been existent,' the word *bhūtā(ni)* was used as often as, nay, oftener than the word *sattā*. As noun, *bhūta* was not needed to come to the aid of the *as*-word, yet there it is. And it is there as the effect of a cause, however that cause be explained.

Let me now return to consider, in the participle *bhūta*, the *fact* of having become. And in passing on to do so, I would point out, that in a formula, occurring thrice in the Suttas, stating the attributes ascribed, earlier it may be, to an impersonal Deity Brahman, later to a personalized personal Brahmā, he is said to

<sup>1</sup> *Nava-niṣāta*.

be “ father of what has become and what may become (or what is to become) ”: *pitā bhūtabhavyānam*.<sup>1</sup> Here our verb *as*, as we have seen, was to seek; to express it participially, the *bhū*-forms had to be used. But other ways were possible. The participle ‘ gone by ’: *atīta* was to hand; so was the other participle ‘ not-come ’: *anāgata*. The verb-stems *i*, to go, and *gam*, to go, were as old as the *bhū*-stem. And actually, when, so I hold, the aspect in culture of things, of man, as coming to be, rather than as being, had faded out, it is just these ‘ go ’-stems which came to be used to speak of past and future. The Piṭakas attached importance to time-aspects and explicitly deprecate the ignoring of them.<sup>2</sup> But that the man was naturally a grower, a becomer, *this* is no longer held in worth. Growth was a process of artificial forcing, a ‘ making-become,’ as we shall presently see. And with the devaluing of becoming *as essential process*, time was no longer referred to as a having become, becoming and to become. It was just past, future and present: *atītanāgata-paccuppanna* (the last item meaning ‘ happening.’) For the commentators too, *bhūta* as verb meant just *upapatti*: ‘ what has happened.’

But where the just ‘ having happened ’ is explicitly *not* meant by the participle *bhūta* occurs twice, in the Second and Third Collections respectively. And in one of those characteristic phrases which peep out at us like ancient stones from a wall of later structure. The old stone (in my opinion) is the phrase: “ Do you see that this has become ? ” *Passa* (or in the plural *passatha*) *bhūtam idam* ? And the answer given in both cases is to contrast something that appears to

<sup>1</sup> *E.g.*, *Dīgha*, i. 18, etc.

<sup>2</sup> *Cf.* especially *Samyutta*, XXII, § 62.

be permanent, unchanging, with a process of caused coming-to-be.

These answers I judge are later, appended, glosses. Why? Because, in the one case, the 'man,' as wayfarer in many lives, is made out to be merely a conscious complex resulting from sensations, in the other case, the result of understanding  $x$  is stated to be a  $y$  which is, not the building-up a positive ideal of life, but a way out from life. In the two we see exemplified respectively the two main influences which bore the young Buddhism away and down from its original teaching as an expansion of the Immanence of its day. Namely, (1) the proto-Sāṅkhya ideal, *plus* the growing rift between it and Immanence, and (2) the growing monastic vogue.

It is worth while setting these two contexts out in some detail.

The former is the main theme in the Sutta No. 38 of the *Majjhima*: the 'chief Sutta on the waning of craving.' The monk Sāti, a 'fisher-son' (hence, be it noted, no brahmin), is maintaining the currently accepted view of the term *viññāṇa*, namely, that it means "the speaker, the experiencer who here or there experiences the result of good and bad actions." Elsewhere in this Collection the definition is applied to the Self, and its persisting identity is made explicit.<sup>1</sup> Both contexts are echoes of the Upanishadic teaching of the day; both belong essentially to that 'seeking after,' that 'will to understand' the Immanent Divine which is the burden of many of those Sayings, and with

<sup>1</sup> "This self who for me is speaker, experiencer, experiences the result of good and bad deeds . . . is perpetual, persistent, ever-recurring, unchanging, the same in recurring, perdures just so." *Ibid.*, No. 2.

which Gotama is said to have begun his mission:—  
“ Were it not better that you sought, sought thoroughly,  
for the Self ?”

This definition we now see sternly attacked, the *viññāṇa* being reduced, not to its religious, but to its literal meaning, namely, of awareness or consciousness, and declared to owe its rise solely to a preceding sensation. Just as a fire owes its rise of necessity to some sort of fuel. It is crudely put, this simile, there being no naming of those other conditions without which no amount or kind of fuel would produce fire. The English translation rightly gives the figure in its simplicity; the German is less discerning, laying an unbased fierceness on the fuel as being the one and only cause:—‘ durch diesen Grund, und nur durch diesen, zustande kommt.’ Both show the figure as unlikely in its crudity to have been the words of a teacher of wisdom and love of truth, whether we read the omission of other causes as intentional or not.

The talk is then renewed with the question: “ This (is) *bhūtam*: do you see, monks ?” The sentence is not in the usual interrogative form, with the particle *nu* or *nanu* ? But the Commentary insists on its being interrogative. And, since the whole discourse hereon is by question and answer we can perhaps accept it as such—but I am doubtful. My twofold point is, that the Founder is shown thrusting the term ‘ become ’ into a discourse which was proceeding, and which concludes in terms of cause and effect, with no heed whatever given either to the *fact of becoming* involving growth in good, not only in ill, or that in that fact lies man’s hope of salvation. Becoming, I say, is thrust in, and is thereupon diverted into a talk on caused

recurrence: which is a different emphasis from a talk on becoming as growth.

The latter context is one of those episodes which, if only they bore on them the impress of the historically true, would be so precious in the story of two great missionaries. In the Third Collection, in the section called Nidāna-vagga: 'section on bases' (or 'cause), Gotama is shown examining Sāriputta on a verse from the little anthology called 'The Going Beyond.' It is, to say the least, unlikely that, before Sāriputta's decease (preceding that of Gotama), this or other sections of the poems called later collectively Suttanipāta had been collected and named in detail. It is anyway a bad beginning for authenticity of the talk.

The two ślokas quoted by Gotama show one Ajita asking him wherein lies for learner and adept the insight in their procedure?<sup>1</sup> Sāriputta is doggedly mute. No reason is given; the exegesis as usual glibly supplies one:—"how does he wish me to answer?" Colloquially, Sāriputta waits for a 'tip.' Abruptly comes the question: "*This is bhūtaṃ ; do you see, Sāriputta ? This is bhūtaṃ ; do you see, Sāriputta ?*" And Sāriputta accordingly sails off, saying, that one sees with wisdom 'as-it-has-become' that it is *bhūtaṃ*, and having so seen it, one proceeds by revulsion, by passionlessness, by stopping, seeing that whatever is *bhūtaṃ* is a thing of stopping, the distinction between learner and adept being that the latter has already attained freedom without grasping. His reply is approved and endorsed.

Here is the pure, the later monk-value, in which emphasis is laid solely on the need to stop, to get rid of, to recoil from. The goal itself is in terms of the

<sup>1</sup> Pārāyana: Ajita's Question.

Not:—of a freedom which is not a positive realizing, but given as just riddance.

I may (without a Concordance) err, but I have only found this abrupt phrase in these two contexts. In its abruptness it is not singular. There is, for instance, a similar abrupt use of the phrase *alam* with the dative case: “enough for you of being in danger!”, of *titthatu*: ‘let be! let be!’, of *aham* with the instrumental: ‘what need have *I* to preach to you?’ (*aham ovādena* etc.). These are, however, sufficiently unlike the main flow of discourse, with its endless refrains of set forms and turns, to make us wonder whether we have not here some winged arrows of utterance that bored deep into memory and persisted.

But the after-context may have been lost, lost the more probably, if what it contained was a teaching departed from as time went on, and the Founder came to stand for a very different ideal from that for which in his earth-lifetime he had stood. I cannot hear him teaching either the context to the ‘this is become’ in the *Majjhima Sutta*, or that in the *Samyutta Sutta*. It is not the teaching of a World-helper. It is not the showing a man a More that was in and before him; it is the showing him a Less. Historically, wrote Winternitz, shortly before he left us,<sup>1</sup> “there is nothing so high . . . so low . . . that it could not have been preached.” True, but not in gospels that were the New Words from which world-churches have sprung.

I would go further and suggest that the very abrupt phrase itself has suffered a worsening. It is not, for me, consistent with the Indian teaching of that day to hear Gotama saying “it” has become. No, verily, I seem to hear Sāriputta telling me, he often and

<sup>1</sup> *Vis'va-bharati Quarterly*, ii. 1, 1937.

often would speak of becoming, but it was ever the man who was becoming. I can remember him saying so: "You see that *he* has become:" *bhūto ayan ti Sāri-putta passasi*. It was only after we had both gone from earth, that our men were absorbed in *mano-bhāvanā*, the development of mind, that they got interested in 'things,' in things as proceeding, in 'it' as become, rather than in the man himself.

As we leave our participle I would draw attention again to our translators' wavering ways over these contexts. In the former, the English translator has for the *Bhūtam idam . . .* the phrase: 'Do you recognize an organism as such?' a modern notion ill-fitting in the ancient discourse. The German is less anachronistic: 'Entstanden ist Dieses: begreift ihr Das?' Here the verb is at least admitted, but why not *geworden*, there ready to hand? In the latter, the German is better: 'Dies ist geworden: siehst du das?'<sup>1</sup> How much better! Yet when we come to *-sambhava*, 'werden' is put aside for his fellow-countryman's 'Entstehung.' How much better to have shown the reader that *the same word* in another inflection was present to the Sayers!

<sup>1</sup> Geiger's translation.

## CHAPTER VIII

### BECOMING IN PROSPECT: *BHAVYA* (*BHABBA*)

COMING to other participles, I have nothing of interest to say concerning the Gerund, viz. 'having been, or become,' save to note, that here the stem *as* appears to be non-existent, the stem *bhū* doing all the work in the three forms *bhavitvā*, *hutvā* and *hutvāna*. I do not find them often in older Pali, and yet the only contexts cited by the Pali Dictionary all occur in the Suttanipāta, usually held to rank among older compilations. I would also note, that in each of these contexts, the meaning is not of just a past or finished happening, but of a process which has been accomplished. Neither the S.B.E. translation by Fausböll of 1881, nor that of the Harvard Oriental Series by Chalmers of fifty-one years later will permit the English reader to see this, so entirely is the Pali meaning smothered in English idiom. In Pali the three phrases run thus: "having become indifferent to other-folk's children," "having become without longings as to all the world," "having become all of one mind."<sup>1</sup> In each case we have the man or men coming-to-be in a certain way, as such: socially indifferent, world-masterer, socially agreed. But the two translations fail to give the least intimation that the Pali, in all three contexts, is so to speak,

<sup>1</sup> *Aṅgossukko paraputtesu hutvā* : S.B.E. 'caring little about other people's children'; H.O.S. 'fret not o'er sons of other men.' *nirāsayo sabbaloke bhavitvā* : S.B.E. 'being free from desire . . .': H.O.S. 'tied to nought the world can show.' *sabbe samagge hutvāna* : S.B.E. 'being all in concord'; H.O.S. 'let all with one accord (him shun).'



rubbing in the notion of a spiritual coming-to-be. And let it be noted, that in each case the Buddhist versifiers *were not compelled* to use the one word 'become'; anyone at all conversant with Pali will see, that the choice of this participle was not forced upon them. Thus the second context might have read *subbaloke virāgo*; in the third, metrical need might have used an equivalent for *samaggī*; there are plenty; (*cf.* D. iii, 245); *they chose to use the bhū-forms.*

I come to more fruitful ground: to the participle called by some Gerundive, by some the future passive, or 'participle of necessity,' and ending in one of three ways: *-ya, -tava, -anīya*.<sup>1</sup> With the last termination we find only a form of *bhū* when what is called the causative is used; whereof more in my next chapter. The first termination, *-ya*, takes, in Pali, with I believe only one exception, the form *-bba*, giving us the participle *bhabba*, namely, what may or should or is bound to, become. This is of frequent occurrence in the Suttas and Anthologies, too, and is throughout used as indicating a very desirable spiritual state. It is virtually a new contribution made by the Pali sayings to Indian literature. The word itself is met with, albeit very rarely in Vedic works,<sup>2</sup> but, so far as I have seen, in a very vaguely all-inclusive sense. Thus, in the Atharva-veda, that late comer among the earlier three, lines about "what is and is to be" occur, *e.g.*, of the earth, "mistress of what is and is to be," the *bhavya* being now contrasted with "what has been," now distinguished from "what will be," *bhavya* then taking the place of *bhava*. And we have seen *bhavya* used in time-terms in the Upanishads.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Whitney, *Sanskrit Grammar*, p. 311.

<sup>2</sup> It is found also in the Rig-veda.

<sup>3</sup> P. 29.

But in Buddhist usage the sense of the participle is made more concise and concrete. The man who is *bhabbo* is, as I have elsewhere said, somewhat paralleled in the Anglo-Christian idiom of a man who is “ saved,” and is, as such, “ working out ” that salvation. He among the deaf is one who “ hath ears to hear.” Thus in the little Udāna anthology,<sup>1</sup> it is told how the Master bethought him, who, among his listeners, was *bhabbo dhammam viññātum*: sure-to-understand, or capable of understanding *dhamma*, that is, religion. (No, *dhamma* did not then mean ‘ teaching,’ anyone’s teaching; it was more.) He discerns it is of all men a leper, one Suppabuddha, and addresses himself accordingly to this man (alas! only a little ‘ set piece ’ of points is recorded, in place of winged words no memory of which survived).

There is perhaps hardly any form of *bhū* which testifies so markedly to the truth of my contention, that the original message in Buddhism was man’s ‘ Becoming,’ as this participle *bhabba*. Here, too, translators have not helped us, but herein is for them less blame, in that the word lacks a European equivalent. The Latin *futurus* is perhaps nearest, as indicating when anything was ‘ due to happen,’ but this requires an *est, sit, esset* to go along, and *bhabba* does not. Again, a Sanskrit impersonal use of the term is paraphrased in the Dictionary as *ut esse debet*: as it ought to be; the Buddhist use of the word on the other hand, seems to be always and only personal; it is the man, not the thing who is to be counted as being or not being ‘ bound to become.’ I have used the word ‘ bound-to ’ as showing the ‘ necessity ’ of which grammarians speak, or, in more poetic diction, ‘ it is his to.’ Thus in *Dhammapada*, 32 (S. B. Bud. VII),

<sup>1</sup> *abhabbo parihānāya ; nibbānass’eva santike.*

I have gone about to give the emphasis by

‘ not his, becomer, is’t to fall away . . . ’

But in many contexts it is impossible to do more than render by able to, capable of, sure to, bound to. I found this the case in the companion-translation of the *Khuddaka-pāṭha* (S. B. B. VII, ii, p. 148):

*abhabbo so tassa paticchādāya,  
abhabbatā diṭṭhapadassa vuttā :*

incapable is he of hiding that,  
uttered is incapacity of man who sees. (lit. of one who has  
seen the way).

Especially, of course, in the negative, in which the term is often used, since we have no forcible negative for ‘ bound to.’ Thus in the line of *Sutta-nipāta* (725, -7) and *Samyutta* (vol. v, 453):

*bhabbā te antakiriyāya, na te jātijarūpagā.  
abhabbā te antakiriyāya te ve jātijarūpagā,*

it is easy to render the former by

bound are they to become in end-making, not goers they to  
birth and decay;

it is less easy to be equally emphatic with ‘ not bound  
are they . . . ’; ‘ incapable ’ has then a stronger ring.

Neither translator attempts here to bring the fact of ‘ becoming ’ before us; Chalmers has: ‘ they surely end it all,’ and ‘ they cannot end it all . . . ’; Woodward has ‘ they, able to end all . . . ’ and ‘ helpless to make an end . . . ’; and the reader remains unconscious. Yet in both works the verses from which I cite begin with an allusion to the term *sambhava*, and here the translators are less unmindful, the one with ‘ how (it) grows,’ the other with ‘ how (it) comes to be.’

I now think I went a little too far when, in my

*Buddhism* (1934), p. 99, I assigned a community-meaning to the term *bhabba*. But that it was a term, shall I say, of religious technique among early Buddhists its frequent and emphatic use seems to make clear, and where idiomatically possible, I hold that a stronger term than just 'able,' 'capable,' should be used, such as my word 'bound to.' This is perhaps best shown in the parable of the hen, a context occurring four times in the Suttas: thus *Majjhima*, No. 16: "just as where a hen has fitly sat over, well warmed, well made-become her clutch of eggs, whatever she wish in the matter, those chicks are bound to become breaking through their sheath and be safely hatched, even so a man equipped with the sum of right energy is bound to become in the hatching out, bound to become in the consummation, bound to become in the ultimate salvation."<sup>1</sup> Again, in *Anguttara* iii, 8, is shown the intimate relation between the participle, *bhabba*, and the ideal of growth, ascent and fulness (*vuddhi*, *virūhi*, *vepulla*), terms which are borrowed this time from vegetable life. "If he have faith, is conscientious, discreet, with stirred up energy and wise, a man in this rule and religion is bound to become in growth," etc. Mr. Hare, in his translation of this volume, gets nearer the strength of *bhabba*, when he renders it by "he must become one who enters the way (*niyama*)."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This recurs in No. 53, in *Samyutta* iii. 153 and in *Anguttara*, iv. 125. The words consummation, salvation are *sambodhāya*, *yogakkhemāya*.

<sup>2</sup> *Anguttara*, iii. 174 (*Gradual Sayings*, iii. 131).

In the negative-abstract form, again, the term (*abhabbatā*) is shown as having, at least in the Order, a distinctly technical rank. In the *Anguttara* 'Threes' (9, 84) we find a monk who may fall short in minor observances is not thereby declared

Once, and I believe only once, does the form *bhabba* occur in the Suttas in the Vedic form *bhavya*—and even here the Commentary reminds us (without further comment) that *bhabba* is meant. This is in three Suttas of the Fourth Collection: two in the Threes section, one in the Fours. In the first and third, the context is put into the mouth of the Founder, and as to that may well have been spoken by him so far as their theme goes.

In the second, the speaker is a monk Nandaka, a name not occurring as that of a contemporary, and the interviewer is a great-grandson of the Founder's eminent contemporary, the lady Visākhā.

Hence we seem to have here an interesting example of an early stage in the handing on of a remembered (certainly unwritten) talk. Here already an added 'improvement' appears: four, not three evil 'springs' active among men: the familiar greed, hate and muddledness (*lobha, dosa, moha*), also 'the concomitant violence' (*sârambha*), the additional item having caused this version to be placed among the Fours.

But in all three appears the unique (?) compound *bhavya-rūpatā*. *Rūpatā*, the abstract of *rūpa*, shape or form, could be used to mean either nature of *rūpa*, or fitness for, conformity to.<sup>1</sup> Here it can only mean

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because of this to have *abhabbatā*, since the essentials of the 'God-life' are by him strictly maintained. And in the somewhat paedagogic summary at the end of *Majjhima*, No. 136, we come up against a fourfold division of karma in terms of *bhabba*, which, it is of interest to see, have been quite superseded in the later *Compendium of Philosophy*, v. 8.

<sup>1</sup> So unusual is the word that I have so far only found it once elsewhere, and that is in a Commentary, Mr. Woodward's ed. of the *Samyutta Comy*. A rather less unusual form is *rūpatta*.

the last. But *bhavya* or *bhabba* should not be explained away as has been done by the German translator, by a rendering of *bhavya* to mean accuracy or fact, for which I can find no justification.<sup>1</sup> I was profoundly relieved when Mr. Woodward agreed to translate *bhavya-rūpatā* by “(because it) agrees with becoming,” abiding by his rendering in all three contexts.

What is that context?

Let us first dismiss the third context; this is obviously inserted from the previous Section into the middle of a different inquiry, the response to which appears when the insertion comes to its end. In the first context we have a very possible episode in one of the Founder's many missionary tours. It is at a village in the kingdom of Kosala of N.E. India. On his arrival the report of his fame as teacher goes about; the Indian of the countryside appears, at least at that time, to have been as anxious in his own way ‘to hear some new thing’ as were the Athenians elsewhere and elsewhen in theirs; and these villagers come to ask him for a test to apply to the views other teachers have already put forward to them, coupled, they say, with much abuse of such as dissent from them. Putting himself in sympathy with them—a way he had—he grants they had a case for perplexity, with his possibly actual phrase *alam hi!*; ‘sure you've enough for being perplexed.’ Then follow ten features in any one's teaching, which, not in themselves of no weight, were to be held as not essential whereby to *test* the speaker.

<sup>1</sup> Nyanatiloka, *op. cit.* In the Threes he has “nicht nach dem Scheine der Wirklichkeit”; in the Fours, the Pali text being identical, he elaborates this into: “nicht danach ob etwas übereinstimmt mit deinen Ansichten, die du hegst und billigst, nicht danach ob dir etwas wahr dünkt”—a nice case of variously thrashing out a puzzling context.

These were report, tradition, hearsay, proficiency in a 'canon' (lit. basket, *pitaka*), logic, method, consideration of mode (of presentation), tolerating by musing about the views, conformity with a will-to-become (*bhavya-rūpatāya*), and finally, worth in the worshipfulness (perhaps the presence) of the teacher himself.

There is no denial here, that one or all of these ten points might have a weight that was proper. But the one test was, that the views put forth would, if accepted, conduce to a better standard of living. Set out in detail, this living was to be purged of the three roots of evil: lust, hate, muddledness (*lobha, dosa, moha*): now would a given man's teaching forward this work? And for this reason we find these three Sayings put, not among the later section of 'Tens,' but among the 'Threes.'

Now the last non-essential but one (see above, p. 132) that a teacher's utterances should have conformity with 'becoming,' has, so rendered, a forced look about it, and it is quite possible, that hitherto Mr. Woodward's rendering has been ruled out by this or that exponent of the Sutta, Buddhist or other, who may have consulted his translation. (This Sutta happens to be one of the very few, that Buddhists, whether native or converted, are acquainted with.) But this forced look is, I believe, due to the fact, that no exponent of Buddhism has ever taken *bhava* (or *bhavya*) to have been at its heart and from the first, a gospel of man's 'becoming.' Once we admit this, and imagine—how slow we are in religious history to do that!—that on tour after tour Gotama and his men were expanding the current teaching of Immanence, of man's *identity with God* (worded as Brahma—in Brahmācariya—as Dharma, as Ātmā,

as Agga, as Amat'agga), into man's *need of becoming* God, that is, less unlike God, so that he and they could *refer to their teaching* under the name of *bhavya* or *bhava*, then it falls into keeping with other features which those villagers might have heard ventilated by peripatetic teachers: thus, "as to X, Y, Z, not omitting what you hear us teach," namely, the need man has of becoming, or of being one bound to become.

I am not blind to the fact that (to speak alas! without a Concordance), this compound 'in conformity with becoming' would not, in that case, have survived as a *hapaxlegomenon*. Nor am I blind to the fact, that in a similar list of features in teaching, this one term is omitted. This is in the canonical commentary called *Niddess* (p. 191). But *both facts are significant*, in view of the change that had come over the values in the teaching when these Sayings were taking final shape. It is likely enough, that the compound was originally *bhava-rūpatā*. *Bhava*, we have seen, had fallen out of favour; it was natural enough to change it to *bhavya* (or *bhabba-*), approved as a tradition in training, yet other than the dangerous *bhava*. It was natural enough to omit it without ruth in the less venerated book of exegesis. 'Scanty evidence!' I hear the scoffer say; but they who dig for ancient remains in Troy, Crete or Mohenja-daro do not think lightly of finds because they may be scanty.

There lies especial value for me in this frequent use of the participle 'of necessity,' in its serving, more than most terms, to express that new worth in 'will,' after which India had been feeling, but which in Sakya or original Buddhism is much more definitely felt after than before. It could not but be that, after being trained in the schools in the new great uplift



of the concept of 'Man,' as being virtually That, or divine, the educated Indian would experience a quite new awakening in the dynamic of his spiritual possibilities. He was taught 'thou art,' but this *could only mean* 'thou art bound to become.' In other words, his 'will to become' was being educed. But this word was wanting, save as being implicit, not merely in his word for mind (*manas*), but much more in just the words for that becoming. The future of the stem *bhū* spoke to him of his possibilities-in-time: 'thou wilt become.' But in the participle of necessity he had a word giving him a *vis à tergo*, namely, a force that lay in his very nature; as man thou art bound to become, must become. And it is for me a phenomenon of profoundest meaning, that, whereas the Buddhist did his level best to cast away the precious heritage bequeathed him by Gotama in the reviling of the great word *bhava*, he committed himself to the for him illogical cult of the word *bhavya* or *bhabba*.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE VERB *BHŪ* AS MAKING-BECOME

FOR the benefit of the reader who is not familiar with Indian tongues, let me say, that these have the happy advantage of expressing, by a simple lengthening of the stem, when it is required to state, not merely a doing, but a getting done or causing to be done. The stem-vowel may or may not be made long; the stem itself is lengthened by two or three devices, one of which is the addition of the syllable *ay-* or *e-*. Thus, if friend Balbus of the Latin primers of my youth does not merely himself 'build a wall,' but gets others to do it, the verb *karoti*: 'makes,' becomes *kāreti*: 'has a wall made.' If he needs not himself to go (*gacchati*), he makes another go (*gameti*, *gamāya*). And in our verb *bhū*, the simpler *bhavati* may become complicated as *bhāveti*.

This may here seem of small account. It is anything but that. To return to us translators, the evasion of a literal rendering of the causative of the verb 'become' is largely responsible for the blindness hitherto, in students of early Buddhism, to the significance of a feature in its history *revealed by just this causative* use of that verb. Doubtless a literal rendering of that causative makes awkward English: 'make-become,' 'cause-to-become.' Just as we should say, not 'make go' but 'send,' not 'cause to grow' but cultivate or develop, not make-stand, but place, so we have, to be not inelegant, gone out of the strait way with the causa-

tive *bhāveti*. If the patient reader will follow me, he will then be in a position to judge, whether the use of the form 'make-become' in the Pali Sayings is not trying to tell him something of no little historical importance.

In the first place the causative form of *bhū* is exceedingly rare in pre-Buddhistic literature. Open to correction, I do not see it in the Three Vedas or Brāhmaṇas. It just emerges in early Upanishads and in the Mahābhārata. I alluded to this above (Chapter III).

Now let us come to the Pali Canon. I put aside the Rule Books and the admittedly later Abhidhamma, and confine myself, as hitherto, to the Nikāyas.

#### *Dīgha-Nikāya.*

In the first section, the Sīlakkhandha (Nos. I-XIII), I find no occurrence of the causative *with one exception*. This being exceptional needs to be specially considered. It is in the Eighth Suttanta. Gotama is reported as saying with emphasis, when clearing his reputation of the charge, that he condemned all asceticism (*tapas*): "If the ascetic practices be not accompanied by a 'made-become' attainment of morality, thought and wisdom, the votary is far from being a true samaṇa or brahman (let us say 'holy man'). But in so far as he makes-become a mind of amity, void of anger and ill-will then may he be truly accounted as such."

Here, of translators, Rhys Davids has, for 'made-become,' 'been practised,' and 'has cultivated': both terms being better English idiom than to have used the word 'become.' He has got as near as he could to the Pali without the Pali word. Franke, determined to be 'real elegant,' has in the former

clause 'hat nicht getrachtet,<sup>1</sup> and in the latter, 'sich selbst erzieht,'<sup>2</sup> whereby our poor *bhū* is just out of the picture. Neither scholar has conveyed to the reader, that he has had 'to put across' a newly emerged term, the introduction of which just then and there had a story to tell to one who "had ears to hear."

Compare now with this new, isolated context another such, but one that is already hinted at in this very citation. In the last Suttanta of this section, the Thirteenth, there occurs suddenly, but not previously, the formula known as that of the four divine states or moods (*brahmavihārā*), inculcating a telepathic practice of amity, pity, gladness and poise. I have reasoned elsewhere, that this, taken with other contributive evidence, points to an early annexed cult in the young Buddhism, itself not of Buddhist, but clearly of Brahmanic origin. This telepathic, or rather, televolitional practice brings in three verbs: 'suffuse' (*pharati*), 'pursue' (*āsevati*) and 'make-become' (*bhāveti*). It is just possible that this annexed teaching, in the mouth of its own votaries used either 'pursue' or 'make-become,' the Buddhist annexers preferring the verb 'suffuse,' but, when not talking formula, using all three; for example here, where only 'amity,' not the other three are cited. Especially would they use now one verb now another, before the formula had been drafted, which would tend to uniformity in citation. We can see both the one and the other way of reference: in *Sutta-Nipāta* 73 we have *āsevamāno* (pursuing) and in 507, *bhāvayaṃ* (making become), with no formula; in the Suttas it is the rule, that we find *pharati* (suffusing) with the formula, or we find 'make become' with only 'amity.'

<sup>1</sup> Has not aimed at.

<sup>2</sup> Educates himself.

And I suggest it is fairly possible, that (a) the exploiting of that remarkable brahman gospel and (b) the tendency to exploit the causative of 'become' were more or less contemporaneous accessions to the Sakya teaching, and that they were, by the mouth of revising editors, later still by the hand of such, inserted into the first, or Sīla section of the *Dīgha-Nikāya*.

Then, again, in that Eighth Suttanta, it is just possible, that more original versions than that which we now have—all of them oral only—may have been equally well worded *without the causative*. Thus: if the votary of *tapas* or of morals, etc., will not thereat and therein become friendly or more friendly than before, he is so far a sham.

I do not find this suggestion far-fetched. This *Dīgha* section uses the indicative of 'become' (*bhavati*), especially the future tense, not seldom, and that in contexts where the causative would have been quite in place, had it been more idiomatic when the thirteen Suttantas of that first section were first compiled. For instance, in the Third Suttanta, the conduct whereby a man might open up the Four Channels (*apāyamukhāni*) to supreme knowing and doing, has at every turn 'becoming' used in the indicative, although the causative, expressing what he was intent to bring about, had fitted quite well, had it been then more in vogue.

When we examine the second and third sections of the *Dīgha*, we find that that vogue has actually come about. The single occurrence is replaced by seven and seventeen occurrences respectively. Notably in the last Suttanta of all, the Dasuttara categories, the causative gerundive or 'future of necessity,' 'must be made become' (*bhāvetabba*) takes its place as second

among the ten ways in which things (*dhammā*) ought to be dealt with. Thus: "Which one thing . . . two things . . . ten things ought to be made become?"

Here if I too, in using 'are to be developed,' have tried to be 'elegant,' I have had the good sense at least to supply a brief footnote to say that the Commentary equates *bhāvetabbo* by *vaddhetabbo*: 'to be made grow, or increase.'

So far, then, we see the causative of 'become,' starting like an intruder in the earlier part of a leading canonical work, well established as a term of religious technique at the close of the same. Nor does the verbal noun of the causative: *bhāvanā*, 'making-become,' tell a different tale. This noun, with the indicative present *bhāveti*, and the past participle *bhāvita*, form a salient feature in Sutta compilation, and one that in some works shows gradually increasing usage. In the *Dīgha*'s first section, verbal noun does not appear, and participle scarcely ever; nor is there any but a rare use made of them in the two following sections, the increase being about 7 and 6 as compared with 2.

#### *Majjhima-Nikāya.*

Here is both difference from and likeness to the *Dīgha* results. Taking the canonical sections: the Mūla Fifty (Suttas), the Middle Fifty and the Extra Fifty (*plus* two Suttas), we find on the one hand a somewhat more frequent use of the causative *throughout* than is the case in the *Dīgha*, and, on the other, the same relative increase in Parts II and III as compared with Part I. Thus

in Part	I,	(pp. 524),	11	contexts	of	the	causative	of	<i>bhū</i> ,
"	"	II,	(pp. 266),	23	"	"	"	"	"
"	"	III,	(pp. 302),	20	"	"	"	"	"

In saying 'causative' I include any such forms of the verb and also the verbal noun *bhāvanā*. Everywhere the causative, verb and noun, is used for those exercises to be deliberately undertaken, wherein and whereby the votary was to make-become some function needing production or strengthening and growth—was to become what he was not before. Such as the seven 'parts of awakening' (*bojjhanga*) the four stages in effective will (*iddhi*), and in short the seven categories which came to be called the thirty-seven things, or doctrines, 'pertaining to awakening' (*bodhipakkhiyā dhammā*). These we find in full, for example, in Sutta CLI: the 'Purifying of the Round for Alms.' The monk is to ask himself: "Have I now made become the Four Stations of Mindfulness?" and so on. If the inner reply be "No," then is there "to be a striving for making become (*bhāvanāya vāyāmitabbam*)."

With increase in use the causative is, in this Nikāya, applied to a greater range of exercises; thus 'making become' is prescribed also for psychic experience, namely, such as was to be hoped for in the practice of quiet musing called *jhāna*,<sup>1</sup> also for certain dispositions of mind (*citta*).<sup>2</sup> The growing vogue in such carefully detailed exercises would seem to have gone hand-in-hand with increased use in the convenient causative verb.

That which, as I think, was the older way of speaking: the way of the *man as becoming* this or that, seems to have been replaced by the 'monk' making this or that *idea about himself* become. Thus in the Sixty-Second Sutta: the Rāhulovāda, Gotama is shown bidding his son Rāhula: "Make become the earthlike

<sup>1</sup> Cf. my *Sakya*, ch. vii.

<sup>2</sup> *Majjhima*, iii. 99 f.

making-become" (*paṭhavisamaṃ bhāvanam bhāvehi*), and so on for the other elements, including space.

It were doubtless unreasonable to expect of a translator, that he should, as he might say, mangle his English to the extent here of literal reproduction. Or his German:—the late Karl Neumann let us see he was certainly in no mind to do this. With him, in this Sutta, there is no attempt made to fit in, to expand his own tongue's *werden*; he has "Der Erde gleich sollst du Uebung üben": 'you should practise the practice. . . .' His English successor, Lord Chalmers, is careful to avoid such a tiresome German (and Pali) alliteration, but in so doing he brings us nearer to the Pali with his 'Grow like unto the earth. . . .' For there is surely no word that brings us nearer to 'becoming' than 'growth': a going on to what one was not before. Even the exegesis (albeit here it is silent) is ever equating *bhāveti* with *vaddheti*: make grow.

### *Samyutta-Nikāya.*

Here, whereas the first section is mainly short poems (*Sagātha-vagga*), with much in them suggestive of early outlook, the causative of 'becoming' emerges from the first. The admonishing friend from the next world asks among the earliest items:

How many things should one make further to become ?<sup>1</sup>  
and again:

Making thought and wisdom to become . . .<sup>2</sup>

We even see in the same section the monastic technical term *animittam*, *i.e.* absence-of-'sign,' absence namely of permanence, happiness, self, as to be 'made become':

<sup>1</sup> S. vol. i. 13.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*



*animittañ ca bhāvehi . . .*<sup>1</sup>

as well as other such terms: *sammāditthi* (right view) and *bodhi* (enlightenment).

No increase in the use of the causative appears in any of the remaining fifty-five sections until we come to the last twelve, grouped under the 'Great Section' (P.T.S. ed., vol. v). Here, however, a marked change appears, an increase of 'make-become' contexts quite out of proportion to the relative bulk of these twelve sections; the causative forms, verb and noun, amount to seventy-two contexts. The reason seems here also to be, that the subjects are mainly those features, functions or aspects of the man which it behoves him in his training for religious perfection to 'make become.' We of today might call this 'to create,' or be self-creative. As I have said elsewhere this word was at hand, had the teachers thought well to use it. But they did not, and we do well not to force it in. In a gospel based, as was original 'Buddhism,' on the lofty concept of the 'man,' as accepted in its day, man had no need to 'create' or even recreate himself. His one central need was to grow up into or up to, or to become That Who he potentially was. His it was to evolve, to develop. Here, again, the word was apparently to hand: *vivattati*. We do find it, as in the wise poem of the first *Samyutta* section on the futility of war:

' Thus by the evolution of the deed (*kamma-vivattena*)  
a man who spoils is spoiled in his turn.'<sup>2</sup>

And it is used for alternating world-cycles, such as Leibniz called involution and evolution. Again, *vattati*

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, 188.

<sup>2</sup> One instance is *Ang.* 'Twos,' vagga ii. (vol. i, p. 58).

and *sāmvattati*<sup>1</sup> often occur meaning 'behoves one to do,' or 'conduces towards.' Nevertheless the word *vattati* with its prefixes is very rarely used to mean that spiritual growth or becoming in the very man or soul, the instant and incumbent need of which it is the chief glory of Buddhism to have originally taught.

As to the verbal noun *bhāvanā*, this, too, is found in the First section, if only once:

*yesam divā ca ratto ca bhāvanāya rato mano,*

'for them whose mind day and night delights in making-become.'<sup>2</sup>

It, too, in the following sections remains a rare visitant, leaping up also to twenty-four occurrences in the *Mahāvagga*.

But, returning to the verb, there is one context which we meet with elsewhere in the Book of the Rules (*Vinaya*), where the use of the causative has a forced look even in Pali, suggesting a later editing at work over Sayings of earlier values.

This is a version in the last *Samyutta* (the Great Section or LVI) of what tradition has preserved as the First Utterance or chart of teaching, usually called 'sermon.' For me, as for some others, this utterance has an earlier and an appended portion. In the latter, there is the sudden intrusion of a fourfold diagnosis of Ill, and then a series of reflections on the way in which this diagnosis had occurred and enlightened. Namely, the first in the diagnosis had been 'understood' (*pariññātam*), the second had been 'put away' (*pahīnam*); the third had been realized (*sacchikatam*), but the fourth had been made become (*bhāvitam*).

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid*, i. 85. Geiger's rendering of *vivattena* is "durch Umkehrung des Tuns."

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, i. 48.

Here, of translators, Oldenberg, in his contribution<sup>1</sup> to the volume entitled *Vinaya Texts*, I, of the S.B. East, has the term realized for *bhāvita* (using for the third point) 'seen face to face.' Woodward,<sup>2</sup> coming nearer to the Pali, has 'cultivated,' this being, with 'developed,' the favourite evasions of the awkward causative term.

Now it is not likely that a missionary with a new, an original message for the Many, should think, let alone talk of the central figure—the admittedly central figure—in that message as a Way one should "make become." Let us glance at other teachers of a Way. There is Yājñavalkya:

The way, the old, the long stretched out,  
That have I touched, that even I have found,  
By that the wise, God-knowers, upward go  
Set free into a brighter world.<sup>3</sup>

There is Newman:

There let my way appear  
Steps unto heaven,  
All that thou sendest me  
In mercy given.  
Angels to beckon me  
Nearer, my God, to thee,  
Nearer to thee.

'Touched' 'found' 'appear':—here are words going straight to the heart of things, to be understood of the Many, appealing to 'Man.' 'Become' was also a word that, as we saw, had a vigorous adolescence in India, and we had not been surprised to have found it linked with the Way of man's choice, the Middle Way of the First Utterance. Indeed, as I have elsewhere

<sup>1</sup> He and my husband apparently worked independently, his share including pp. 7-238 of Vol. I.

<sup>2</sup> *Kindred Sayings*, v. 359.

<sup>3</sup> *Bṛhad. Upanishad*, 4, 4, 9.

said, I surmise, that that Way was originally called ‘*bhava-magga*’: way of becoming. When the conception of man as Willer, able to choose the better way in life seen as a long wayfaring, dawned upon the Helper, it was natural to word this as light, as insight breaking in upon him:—“when to me the way became”—‘became’ in the way his age was using that word. But the form ‘made become’ was then not used; it was yet to come into use. It is a good term in that it calls for effort of will: will to walk persistently along it; but the figure of life as a way:—here we have an inspired vision, such as came to Yājñavalkya, and some twenty-five centuries later to Newman. And it is as a vision that we find the way testified to with another verb in the Suttas:

“And while he often contemplates this, the way comes into being (*maggo sañjāyati*)” and thereafter it is that he “makes that way become, pursues it, develops it,” the verses that follow ending on a sublime note:

To me with supersight of goal came will.<sup>1</sup>  
 Not mine it is to be bound to become  
 Pursuant of desires I here can satiate,  
 Nay, never turning-back I shall become  
 A yonder-farer in the life divine.

In those two singers and in this Saying we have got at the back of the causative device; we are at the heart of man in the Quest, willing to become the More and ultimately the Most.

But I have here trespassed into the Fourth Nikāya.

<sup>1</sup> No. 57 in the ‘Fives,’ *Anguttara*, Vol. III.:—

*Tassa me ahu ussāho nibbānaṃ abhipassato :  
 n’āham bhabbo etarahi kāmāni paṭisevitum ;  
 anivatti bhavissāmi brahmacariya-parāyano.*

*Anguttara-Nikāya.*

Here, for no apparent reason, we find no slow beginning of emergence of the causative, followed by a sudden increase. There is, on the contrary, a fairly even distribution of the causative, verb and noun, of 'becoming,' accompanied by some irregularities of occurrence. It will save many words if I present results in a table:

<i>Anguttara.</i>	<i>Nipātas.</i>				
	I-III.	IV.	V-VI.	VII-IX.	X-XI.
<i>Bhāveti</i> (all finite forms)	14	7	9	8	0
<i>Bhū</i> -participles (causative)	8	4	9	9	8
Gerund ( <i>bhāvetabba</i> ) ..	3	0	4	7	4
Verbal noun ( <i>bhāvanā</i> ) ..	4	3	5	4	1
Total .. .. .	29	14	27	28	13

It may here be objected, that we have the causative applied to the Way in a verse of the *Sutta-Nipāta*: "thus may he go from Not-beyond to the Beyond making become the Way supreme, that very Way for going to Beyond."

*aparā pāraṃ gaccheyya bhāvento maggam uttamam,  
maggo so pārangamanāya . . .*

It is true that this is at the end of the compilation, yet is this section cited, as we saw above (Chapter V), in the *Samyutta* under its name Pārāyana.

Well, I incline to think we have in the *story* of the

Pārāyana an old and a true memory of how the Brahman teacher sent his pupils to question Gotama. It is, however, another thing, when we come to the wording in which questions and answers have come down to us. The hands that edited the First Utterance, to mention no other Sayings, may have got busy over the Pārāyana. This is not to say that the work of editing waited to begin until some such general revision took place, such as seems to have happened at Patna in the so-called Third Council. Where teachers are scattered, teaching, repeating, handing down sayings totally unwritten, there may well have been, there almost inevitably must have been, a gradual 'bettering' of the said, a gradual otherwise-saying of the said, ever going on. For teachers and repeaters were not automata, robots, gramophone records, but live men, distinct individuals, divergent valuers. There was, it is true, the word *caranto*,<sup>1</sup> much used for the religious life, metrically fitting equally well with *bhāvento*. But then there was the traditional association of 'way' with *bhava*, and in the new vogue of the causative it had become possible to maintain that tradition in a manner that was unexceptionable—that is, without the depreciated word *bhava*.

Can anything here be concluded respecting the history of the *bhū*-causative?

Let this first be noted:—Few things, in the compilation of this Collection, are so safely to be affirmed as the evidence, that each *Nipāta*, or numerical section, was completed in its turn, and not reopened to admit later incoming of titular material. As I have said elsewhere, between the completion of the Fourth

<sup>1</sup> Walking, living.

Nipāta and that of the Ninth, the exercise-formulas known as the four stations of mindfulness and the four right efforts had come to be drawn up and ranked of importance, especially the former. But they are omitted from the Fours and inserted—inserted, that is as titular—under the Nines, where, to make up Nine, this or that category of Five is brought in to make up the requisite number.

Yet in the table above, this time-element, which seemed to be also apparent in a growing vogue of causative usage, is blurred, not to say reversed. Between Nipātas I and XI we see either a waning of that usage, or one that is fairly stationary.

To some extent we may, in its falling away in the last Nipātas, find explanation in their contents. Where these are categories of prescribed procedure, the object is mainly of elaborated *samādhi* or concentration, somehow less associated with deliberate will-departures for which the 'making become' is used. Again, the layman comes to the front, asking how he should live, he who had time before him, with less pressure brought on him to make a short-cut out of life. Lastly, some twos and threes are swept into these longer numbers of items, not, it may be, held worth building up as in the case of the Nines.

At the same time this does not sufficiently account for the contrast between the use of *bhāveti* and all finite inflections in Nipātas I-III, with none in X, XI, or for the absence of the gerundive *bhāvetabba* in Nipāta IV alone. I have at present no certain solution to offer. Just where we should expect to find a relatively steady increase in contexts with the *bhū-*causatives, such as is on the whole suggested by the other three Nikāyas, we find nothing of the sort.

I incline to the hypothesis, that some residual explanation may lie in *editorial work*, busy over the lists of affirmations and of subjects for study with which the first two Nipātas are largely filled. I venture to suggest, that where, in the Sayings, the term *bhava-pāripūrī* (perfection of becoming) was uttered, editors changed this to *bhāvanā-pāripūrī*, 'making-become-perfection,' and that where the twin terms *bhūta bāhulīkata* (become, increased) were uttered, the newer form *bhāvita* (made-become) *bāhulīkata* was held preferable. That, again, where are the many repetitions of 'making-become' (*bhāveti*) of *kaṣiṇas* (musing-objects), ideas (*saññā*), recollection (*anussati*), spiritual faculties or 'strengths' (*indriya, bala*) and the four divine moods, the new and 'fashionable' term was made to replace other older usages. Such were *āsevati* (pursue, exercise), and the verbal noun of the exercise with the discarded word *bhavati*, 'becomes,' thus, *āsubhasaññī bhavati*: 'becomes one who is mindful of things as foul.'

This is not the wild guess-work it may seem to some. But it demands that I spend a few more minutes in showing that it holds water.

The causative forms 'makes become' (*bhāveti*) and 'making become' (*bhāvanā*) first make their appearance in a long Sutta at the end of the Nipāta of the Ones. That appearance is worth noticing. The preceding Sutta called Appamattaka (momentary) is second in a group of supplementary Sayings to the Suttas properly to be called the 'Ones.' These finish with the description of Makkhali, a well-known teacher, of whom no more here. The supplement then begins, with no reference to any one thing to be described, but with a contrast between two things



namely, wrong and right exposition of doctrine. This contrast is stated in four pairs. We then start abruptly on a list of things introduced with similes (*seyyathâpi*: 'just as'), continued into the next Sutta, *which actually begins here*. And note, that the first group of similes shows up a *violent and unprecedented repulsion from 'becoming' (bhava)*. In the *Dīgha-Nikāya* we found *bhava* as what a well-wisher willed for another. But here nothing is too filthy with which to compare 'becoming.' Next, other matters are compared, as violently differing in proportion of number. Incidentally we have the verbal noun used with 'become' mentioned above, "we shall become acquirers of the essence of the Aim, of Dhamma, of liberty" (*lābhino bhavissāma*). Here it is the 'man' who will become; it is not the 'quality of,' or 'idea about' the man which is to be 'made-to-become.'

Now to review what we have just got:

- (1) something *suggesting* an appendix tacked on to the end of the Ones.
- (2) something *beginning* quite abruptly with a violent attack on 'becoming.'
- (3) something *showing* a sudden emergence of the causative forms of *bhū*, *i.e.* with, not becoming, but making-become.

And my conclusion is, that here we have editors of a later date, busy to establish, by insertion in an earlier collection of Sayings, a certain change in religious values belonging to their own time. A certain value had been damned; another value had to be maintained. The first value lay in the term *bhava*, becoming; the second value lay in the *traditional* importance in their cult of the 'man' as more than just 'being.' His it

was, so India ever upheld, to 'come-to-know' and realize the 'That,' the Deity in his own nature. And even if there was a blight come over *bhava*, 'becoming,' a possible substitute lay in *bhāv-*. In the idea 'make-become,' progress in knowledge and in realization suffered no set-back.

No context confirms this hypothesis. Scriptures, I repeat, tell not of what is going on so much as of what is done. But let it be remembered, that in the Piṭakas we have implicit the story of a literary diction: Pali, coming into being (as literary English did) on a basis of dialects, namely, of Prakrit dialects. And as that diction grew under the studies of a monastic corporation (which became less active in missionizing, more sedentary), the new diction would develop grammatically, derivatives from archaic form being found both useful and plausible.

Why, then arises the obvious question, why and how should such a change in these values have come about? What had happened to 'damn' *bhava*? This I have told in Chapter IV.

## CHAPTER X

### THE *BHŪ*-STEM WITH PREFIXES

IN making survey of the *bhū*-inflections in the Suttas, I came across many contexts where the verb and noun occur with the prefixes in which Indian literature is rich. I am glancing at them here, for I deem one need not be a philologist to find this way of man's efforts to express himself of great and general interest. I give a list of most of them (I do not pretend it is exhaustive), with samples of the contexts, and of the treatment this had met with by translators.

1. *Adhi-bhav-*.
2. *Abhi-bhav-*  
(*Ati-bhav-* is later.)

In these we have the meaning of a more, in the stem-meaning; hence the word is used for success, victory, conquest.

- “ A person of ten qualities . . . is successful ” (*adhibhoti*).<sup>1</sup>  
“ So living, sense-objects overcame the monk; he did not overcome them (*adhibhamsu, adhibhosi*). ”<sup>2</sup>  
“ Who overcometh all (*abhibhum*), who understandeth all, That is the man of whom I'd say: He lives alone. ”<sup>3</sup>

3. *Anu-bhav-*.

“ If cultivated, what profit does calm attain? Mind is cultivated. ”  
(*Samatho ca bhāvito, kam attham anubhoti? Cittaṃ bhāvīyati.*)<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *A.* v. 248.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, xxi. § 10.

<sup>2</sup> *S.* XXXV. § 202.

<sup>4</sup> *A.* i. 61.

4. *Eki-bhav-*.*Ekodi-bhav-*.

“ Verily this condition is conducive to singleness (of mind).”

“ enters into internal calm of heart ” (*ekībhāvāya*) (*cetaso ekodibhāvaṃ upasampajja*).<sup>1</sup>

“ Erhebung und Zusammenschluss des Geistes gewonnen.”

5. *Pa-bhav-*.

“ The derivation, origin, birth, production of all four sustenances . . . ”

(*Ime cattāro āhārā kiṃ-nidānā kiṃ-samudayā kiṃ-jātikā kiṃ-ṭabhavā.*)<sup>2</sup>

6. *Pari-bhav-* and *ṭari-bhāv-*.

“ . . . let not a man despise him.”<sup>3</sup>

“ Great becomes the fruit of earnest contemplation . . . set round with upright conduct.”

(*mahapphalo hoti sīla-ṭaribhāvito samādhi.*)<sup>4</sup>

“ It is like a hen with . . . eggs . . . keeping them as warm as may be with all her pains and care . . . ”

(*Seyyathāpi kukkuṭiyā aṇḍāni . . . sammā ṭaribhāvītāni . . .*)

“ Just as if a hen’s eggs are fully brooded over . . . ”<sup>5</sup>

“ Just as if a sitting of . . . hen’s eggs were . . . fully made to become . . . ”

7. *Pātu-bhav-*.

“ When this happens, the palace of Brahmā appears, but it is empty.”

“ . . . dann erscheint der leere Brahmā-palast.” (*vivaṭṭa-māne loke suññam brahmavimānam ṭatubhavati.*)<sup>6</sup>

“ It is revealed to me, Exalted One ! It is revealed to me, Blessed One !”

“ Es leuchtet mir etwas auf, Erhabener ! Es leuchtet mir etwas auf, Pfadführer !”

(*ṭatibhāti maṃ, Bhagavā ! ṭatibhāti maṃ, Sugata ! ṭatibhātu taṃ, Vangīsa !*)<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *M.*, No. 48; No. 4.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, No. 38.

<sup>3</sup> *S.* III. § 1.

<sup>4</sup> *D.* No. 16 (ii. 84).

<sup>5</sup> *M.* No. 16.

<sup>6</sup> *D.* No. 1 (i. 17).

<sup>7</sup> *S.* VIII. § 5.



“ Do you recognize it as the product of a particular sustenance ?”

(*Tad-āhāra-sambhavan ti passatha ?*)<sup>1</sup>

“ 'Tis only ill that comes to pass.” (*dukkham eva hi sambhoti.*)<sup>2</sup>

“ . . . maintain existing creatures or help those yet to be.” (*bhūtānaṃ vā sattānaṃ thitiyā sambhav'esīnaṃ vā anuggahāya.*)<sup>3</sup>

“ without assignable conditions consciousness does not come about.”

(*aññatra paccayā natthi viññāṇassa sambhavo.*)<sup>4</sup>

“ the cause of life immeasurable or small.”

(*tulam atulañ ca sambhavaṃ . . .*)<sup>5</sup>

“ his own life's compound . . .” “ measurable and the measureless . . .”

“ the cloth-privileges come to pass.”

(*sambhunāti kaṭhin'uddhāraṃ.*)<sup>6</sup>

“ or failing continence ”

(*asambhunanto pana brahmacariyaṃ*)<sup>7</sup>

In this list there is one anomaly, a compound about which philologists are not at odds (so far as I know), but which is in need of explanation. I refer to No. 6, where the prefix *pari-*, meaning a *plus* of thoroughness, is prefixed to *bhav-* with the sense of despising, disvaluing. It goes, as it stands, against the radical meaning of *bhav-* of a more-in-life, of a *vuddhi*, or growth. When the prefix *pari-*, is followed by the *causative* of *bhū*, then this worsening is reversed, as the contexts show. I say this only to pass on, for where doctors may disagree, I cannot claim to have a voice. But it will be of interest to the next generation to see, whether the anomalous *pari* becomes linked up with the prefix *pali-* (confused dialectically with *pari-*) in such an anomalous word as *palibodho*, a word which in the monk-career became a technical

<sup>1</sup> *M.* No. 38.    <sup>2</sup> *S. V.* § 10 (i. 135).    <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, XII. § 11 (ii. 11).

<sup>4</sup> *M.* No. 38.

<sup>5</sup> *D.* No. xvi (ii. 107).

<sup>6</sup> *Vinaya*, i. 256.

<sup>7</sup> *Sutta-Nipāta*, 396.

term for 'obstacle, hindrance,' e.g., to the fit arranging of the religious life.<sup>1</sup>

The one matter about these compound forms of *bhū* that seems to admit of no doubt is, that the prefixes one and all intensify the meaning, in the stem, of a becoming, rather than a being. In them we are, even more than with the unprefixes verb, in the realm of the More, the New, the Coming to be. And this in spite of all the curious and ingenious devices of the translator to avoid saying this plainly. We can note that, where just the word 'become this' or 'become thus' would have given the sense, we get such makeshifts as 'be successful,' appear, make manifest, grow, unfevered, merge, keeping, starts from, product, comes to pass, existing, yet to be, cause of, birth, failing, assembled together. Verily one would say there must here have been conspiracy!—would say, that is, if we came *ab ovo* on such a library of translation. It cannot be questioned that in this variety we get a much more literary literature than would have been the case, had the writers stuck hard to 'become this or become thus.' As it is, we have the more agreeable reading, but with almost utter unawareness of the common message all the *bhū*'s-cum-prefix are trying to tell us. That they are speaking of a becoming more, becoming greatly, becoming thoroughly, becoming continuously or together, becoming manifest or cool or cold, or alone: all this we can, we should see as implied in that long list of evasions, but as it is, we have to infer where we might have seen face to face.

And there is another feature which in the translations does not 'become manifest.' This is that, in all but the one later form, the *bhū*'s with prefix show us the

<sup>1</sup> *Visuddhi-magga*, ch. iii. § 7.

'man' as becoming, as coming to experience, as learning the new, the fresh. But in that variety of subterfuges this is made, at least, far less evident. The one later form referred to is the causative, where (under *pari-bhāv-*) some idea, some abstraction rather than the 'man' is 'made become.' Thus the older form in No. 1 would have been worded in some such form as 'greatly grows the virtuous man when he becomes one given to concentrated thought'; or 'the thoughtful man when he becomes one who is wise.' But we are here in the idiom of the causative, the idiom preferred by monastic Buddhism for reasons I have tried to give. And the monk's estimate of the 'man' was a resolution of him into 'states' or 'ideas.'



## CHAPTER XI

### WORDS AT PARTING

I HAVE tried in these few pages to put up a fight for what is for me at once essentially true and historically true. I have tried to show that, in the era preceding ours, India, in the mouth of some of her teachers, as an essential part of a new gospel of Immanence, had been feeling after ways to express the true nature of man. Namely, that he is by nature not static still-stander, but a dynamic becomer. He is in the first place willer, and in willing he seeks to become what seems to him to be in some ways better than he was before. To give expression to this, India was mainly constrained to use such words as (by previous willing) she had to hand. As finding, in these, mainly things seen and ways of seeing, and as finding to a lesser degree than this, things about which to will and do, her stock of will-words was poor. But in a world where there was so much that lived, and in living grew, she had here among other words, one that expressed this for her. This was not the word 'be,' but another, a richer word: 'become': *bhū, bhav-*. And to express adequately, logically all that Immanence opened up for her, she needed just this word. This word accordingly we find the Indian using to a fuller extent than before. For however much he seems, in his Sayings, to be insisting on an identity with a Most Who was the very inward 'he,' he also realized that, as was 'said by a singer long after his day:

*au fond de l'idéal Dieu fait signe !*

and that the response to that beckoning meant a long, long willing of tireless endeavour in and past the More. In that willed wayfaring he was in process of becoming. That process he called *bhava*; that proceeding he called *bhavati*; that process ahead of him he called *bhavissati*; the promise and seal of that becoming he saw in himself as *bhabba*: the 'bound to become.' And when he worsened life's opportunities in a dimmed ideal, namely that for man consummation of manhood on earth was possible and alone desirable, and, in dropping *bhava* as bound up with mere recurrence there and thus, made shift with the word *bhāveti*, *bhāvita*, *bhāvanā*, still with him went an indomitable will to make-become, if so he might attain his short-circuited Most.

If this be once conceded as a true exposition of early Indian religious outlook, it becomes obvious, that in translating its speech into modern European idiom, nothing should come between that outlook-as-expressed and the reader. But because it is not conceded, and therefore not obvious, the reader gets the European ways of seeing life blurring those of the early Indian. I have here through translations showed many such European ways, as on the whole concealing rather than revealing what is historically true. And the harm hereby done is a grave set-off to the benefit rendered by translations of Sayings dating from before and after the rise of that Sakyan mission we now call Buddhism.

My contribution as translator in this field, now finished, was done during years (1908-22) when the full significance of the *bhū*-inflections was for me not made manifest. If here and there I have used few makeshifts for 'become,' it was because, thanks to my mother's educational enterprise, the cult in German

of the word *werden* was strong in me, and responded to the call of the *bhū*-forms in Pali. May future translators ponder over that significance and, where choice arises, let go the better 'style' that they may keep nearer to the true, the essentially true, the historically true!

## INDEX

- Agga*, 53, 110, 135  
 Analysts, 65 f.  
*Ānanda*, 6, 8, 53, 72, 93  
*Anta*, 7 n.  
 Asceticism, 116  
 Asokan edicts, 68 f.
- Barnett, L., 48  
 Be for become, 11, 26  
 Become in survival, 39, 65, 68, 105  
 Become not a mere copula, 108, cf. 20  
 'Becomes of,' 38  
 Becoming, 2 ff., 51 f.  
 Becoming, and conditions of, 58; conformity to, 133  
 Becoming and creation, 44, 144  
 Becoming, contested, 34, 45  
 'Becomings,' 54 ff.  
 Being and becoming, 7 ff.  
 Bergson, H., 29, 118  
 Bhagwat, 80  
*Bhūta*, 119 f.  
 Bhūta, poet, 120  
 Bloomfield's Concordance, 31  
*Brahmabhūta*, 49  
 Brahma-moods, 106 f., 139  
 Brahmans, 6, 8, 20, 27, 45, 60  
 Buddhaghosa, 58, 119 f.  
 Buddhist gospel, 3, 5
- Causative of *bhū*, 48, 137 ff.  
 Chalmers, Lord, 3 n., 62, 81, 85, 105, 114, 130  
 Chundī, 23  
 Confession, as growth, 67
- Deussen, P., 20, 32 f., 35, 37, 44, 46  
 Deva, 48, 100  
*Dhamma*, 60, 82, 129  
*Dhammā* (pl.), 21 n.  
 Doṇa, 99  
 Double negative, 17
- Edmunds, A. I., 80  
 Equivalence, 19
- Fausböll, 80 f.  
 Franke, R. O., 73, 138
- Gaudapada, 46  
 Geiger, W., 82, 126, 145 n.  
*genesthai*, 10 f.  
 Genitive, breadth of, 64  
 Gotama, founder of 'Buddhism,' 2 f., 6, 53 f., 70, 81 f., 84 f., 92 f., 100 f., 109, 112, 116, 119, 123 f., 138  
 Growth, 26, 59, 66 f.
- Hare, E. M., 64 n., 73, 79, 99, 101, 106, 131  
*hayah*, 9 f.  
 Heimann, Dr. B., 28  
 Homer, I. B., 59 n.  
 Hooke, S. H., 10 n.  
 Hoti, equals atthi? 18 f.  
 How, Why, What, 24  
 Hume, R. E., 31, 36 ff., 37 f.
- Illogical, the, in Immanence, 5  
 Imperative mood, 79 f.  
 Is, informative or assertive, 13 ff.

- Jacob's Concordance, 30  
 Jotipāla, 52  
*Kāma*, 112  
 Knowing the Unknown, 58  
 Kopp, H., 97  
 'Lives,' 56 f.  
 Max-Müller, 32, 35 f., 80  
 Mead, 35  
 Nandaka, 132  
 Neumann, K., 4, 47, 105, 114  
 Newman, J. H., 140 f.  
 Nuns, 80 f.  
 Nyanatiloka, 98, 133 n.  
 Oldenberg, 110, 146  
 Omniscience, 101  
 Pali, a literary diction, 18 f.,  
 153  
*Pārāgu*, 61  
 Pārāyana, 148  
*Pari-* and *pali-*, 157  
 Paṭicca-samuppāda, 7, 21  
 Patna debates, 65, 94, 149  
 Play, 44  
 Potentially, 42  
 Potential mood, 70  
 Poṭṭhapāda, 90  
 Prakrit, 90  
 Prayer, 35  
 Puṇṇa, 2 f.  
 Rāhula, 142 f.  
 Rāmānuja, 44  
 Recurrence, 87  
 Rhys Davids, 62, 67, 72,  
 88 n., 91 n., 110, 111 n.,  
 117 n., 138  
 Sāriputta, 26, 59, 110, 124 f.  
 Sāti, 122  
 Saunders, K., 80  
 Self as = God, 15, 123  
 Sīlacara, 80  
 Stede, W., 117 n.  
*Sud(d)hi*, 68  
 Suppabuddha, leper, 129  
*Tamatagge*, 109  
 Time as becoming, 29, 87, 95,  
 121  
 'True heirs,' 81  
 Turner, R. L., 22  
 Undistributed Middle, 65  
 Upaka, 84 f.  
 Vajjians, 92, 98  
 Vakkali, 102  
 Vesālī, 66  
*Vīññāṇa*, 55, 122 f.  
*Wairthan*, why dropped? 11  
 Was, were = dwell, 88  
 Way, 50, 148; as eightfold, 16  
 What, how, why, 24  
 Whitney, 96  
 Will, 112  
 Winternitz, 31, 125  
 Woodward, F. L., 6 n., 7 n.,  
 62, 80, 84, 106, 110, 111 n.,  
 130, 132 n., f., 134, 146  
 Worlds, 56 f.  
 Yahuda, Dr. A. S., 9 n.  
 Yājñavalkya, 42, 146  
 Zen, 7

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