

personally witnessed, another great shrine, on the pattern of the Great Shrine Śrīraṅgam (near Trichinopoly on the Kāveri River), has grown at Bṛndāvana, on the lines ordained in the *Pāñcarātra* or *Bhāgavat-śāstra* (*vide* my article on this theme in JRAS. October, 1911), to which Rāmānuja and his school belong.

6. Even before Rāmānuja, St. Parakāla (Kali Age)¹ visited the shores of the Yamunā; next Yāmunaçārya, the great Guru of Rāmānuja in the tenth century, obtained his name Yāmuna by dwelling on the banks of the Yamunā.

7. All these events go to illustrate the anecdote so aptly unearthed by Dr. Grierson from Indian *bhakti* literature.

A. GOVINDĀCĀRYA SVĀMIN.

MYSORE (SOUTH INDIA).
October 25, 1911.

ANOTHER NOTE ON THE WORD BHAGAVAN

In JRAS. for 1911, p. 194, Dr. F. Otto Schrader advocates "Holy" for *Bhagavān*. But this word would only be equivalent to *Śuddhaḥ*, *Parīśuddhaḥ*, *Pātaḥ*, *Pāvanaḥ*, *Pavitraḥ*, used in Sanskrit as epithets of God, and would not express the totality of attributes involved in *Bhagavān*.

The term "Perfect" which I proposed along with other terms, such as "Glorious", "Blessed", etc., although it approaches the perfection of God in all auspicious attributes, would literally, though not connotatively, be an equivalent of the Sanskrit *Pārṇaḥ*, another epithet of the Deity.

Other epithets which imperfectly comprehend all that is intended by *Bhagavān* are Divine, Supreme, Exalted, and Blissful. The second and third of these are represented by the Sanskrit *Paraḥ*, while Blissful has its counterpart

¹ No. 17, in the hierarchic Table attached to my *Lives of Saints*: his Tamil name is Tirumaṅgai.

in *Ānandah*. Divine is simply that which pertains to *Deva* (*Divya*).

The infinitude of the auspicious attributes of God, and the entire absence of inauspicious attributes, are implied by the word *Bhagavān*, as explained in the verse from the *Viṣṇu-Purāṇa* (VI. v. 79) quoted several times in the course of this correspondence. On p. 7 of my English translation of the *Bhagavad - Gītā* with Rāmānuja's Commentary, I rendered the six types of attributes therein enumerated as follows: (1) *jñāna*, omniscience; (2) *śakti*, omnipotence or power; (3) *bala*, strength; (4) *aiśvarya*, sovereignty; (5) *vīrya*, constancy or endurance; (6) *tējas*, glory.¹ The question is therefore what single term could be chosen to completely express omniscience + omnipotence + strength + sovereignty + endurance + glory? There are three from which to choose—Perfect, Divine, Blessed. Inasmuch as, not only in idiom and sentiment but also in usage, in both English and Sanskrit, the word "Blessed" most nearly approaches *Bhagavān*, I resign in its favour terms "Perfect" and "Divine", and join Professor Hopkins, who supports this rendering in his article on "The Epic use of Bhagavat" on pp. 727 ff. of JRAS. for 1911. But I should nevertheless prefer the adoption of the word "Bhagavat" itself, without translation, just as "avatāra", "karma", and "paṇḍit" have been admitted citizenship in the vocabulary of the English language.

I am unable to accept Mr. V. V. Sovani's statement that the term *Bhagavān* was first used of great spiritual teachers and inquirers, and that next it came to be used as an epithet of those persons who had acquired spiritual powers, and that then it came to be used of emancipated souls, and, finally, of God. On the contrary, I agree with Professor Hopkins when he says: "It does not

¹ Even these renderings are tentative, but for our present purpose they may be accepted.

seem to me that the advance in application indicated by *teacher, spiritually gifted persons, emancipated souls, God*, can be maintained as a strictly historical fact." As for me, Parāśara settles the question in a reverse order—

Aśabda-gōcarasyā 'pi tasya vai Brahmano, dvija |
pūjāyām BHAGAVAT-śabdah kriyate hy upacārataḥ ||
 (Viṣṇu-Purāṇa, VI. v. 71.)

The purport of this verse is that God is ineffable—no word can express Him, but, as in His personal character he possesses “perfections” or “auspicious attributes”, even the word “Bhagavān” is a conditional or reverential appellative—a word chosen for the sake of reverence to designate Him.

tatra pūjya-padārtho-'kti paribhāṣā-samanvitaḥ |
śabdō 'yam nō 'pacāreṇa tv anyatra hy upacārataḥ ||
 (ib. 77.)

But even this term *Bhagavān*, as a conditional epithet for God, is a sign or mark most aptly expressive of Him. Primarily it expresses “God”, and it is only secondarily transferred or applied to others (teachers, etc., of Mr. Sovani) as an honorific or courtesy title. Parāśara himself explains how the term most fully expresses the idea of God in *Viṣṇu - Purāna*: VI. v. 72-6. It is unnecessary to quote the text, which is easily accessible.

“O Maitreya, the word *Bhagavat* is expressive of Para-Brahman, the holy, the ineffably glorious, the cause of all causes. (72.)

“The syllable *bha* has two senses—Prop and Protector; and the syllable *ga*, O sage, means ‘Leader’, ‘Director’, ‘Creator’. (73.)

“The dissyllable *bhaga* is the sign expressive of the sextuple totality of sovereignty, energy, glory, wealth, wisdom, and freedom. (74.)

“The syllable *va* (= *vān*) is for Him who, by virtue of all objects (beings) abiding in Him, is the Inexhaustible,

the Spirit of beings, the All-Spirit—He abiding in all things without exception. (75.)

“Thus, Maitreya, this great word *Bhagavān* is the epithet solely of Vāsudēva, who is Para-Brahman; and is not otherwise applicable.” (76.)

Then follows verse 77 already quoted, and the whole is summed up in the oft-quoted 79th verse referred to above, which it is needless to repeat.

The Naighaṇṭukas have ruled “*Tatra-bhavān BHAGAVAN iti śabdo vṛddhaiḥ prayujyate pūjye*”; the terms *Tatra-bhavān* and *Bhagavān* are used by great men for adorable objects.

Dr. G. A. Grierson’s choice “Adorable” is but the equivalent of *Dhyeyak*, or *Upāsyaḥ*, or *Arcyaḥ*.

Until, therefore, further perfection is attained, I would adhere to “Blessed” as the best translation of *Bhagavān*, which has a predicative value, of which even the Latin *Optimus Maximus* falls very much short.

A. GOVINDACĀRYA SVĀMIN.

VĒDA-GRIHAM, MYSORE.

October 25, 1911.

TWO CORRECTED READINGS IN THE MYAZEDI (TALAING) INSCRIPTION

The words which I read as *dijhām* and *ijhim* in my transliterations of the above-named inscription published in this Journal should be written *diñcām* and *iñcim* respectively. I make this alteration both on palæographical and on linguistic grounds. The symbol which I had conjecturally rendered *jh* is plainly, as I now see, *ñc*, a composite of *ñ* and *c* (the Pāli version, I am informed by Mr. Taw Sein Ko, confirms this); and the amended readings give forms which from the point of view of comparative phonetics are more acceptable than my first readings, because more consistent with the phonetic system of