

be given regular holidays and bonuses in times of prosperity. They should rise early and go to bed late in the service of their master, be content with their just wages, work thoroughly, and maintain their master's reputation.

Precepts such as these, which are implicit in the teaching of other religions, are nowhere else so clearly and unequivocally expressed. Specially noteworthy are the duties of husbands to wives and of masters to servants, which seem to anticipate twentieth century ideas on the rights of women and employees.

Among the most important vehicles of Buddhist ethical teaching are the Jātaka stories. These are mostly of secular origin, and many merely inculcate shrewdness and caution in everyday life, as do Æsop's fables (e.g. that given in full on p. 456f). Others teach generosity and self-abnegation in morbidly exaggerated forms, for instance the tale of King Śivi (known also in Hinduism), who ransomed a pigeon from a famished hawk with flesh cut from his own thigh. Many modern readers may well find the very popular story of Prince Viśvāntara (Pāli, Vessantara) distasteful. This prince gave away so much of his royal father's treasure that he was banished with his wife and children in a carriage drawn by four horses. As he left, he gave away the carriage and horses for the asking, and settled in a hut in the forest with his family. Soon he gave his children to a wandering ascetic who needed them to do his begging for him, and finally he disposed of his wife in similar manner. But all ended happily, for those who had asked him for his most precious possessions were gods in disguise who had decided to test his generosity, and he was at last restored to his family and his patrimony (pl. XXVIII). But many old Buddhist stories are of the highest ethical quality, such as that of the monkey who saved the lives of his fellows from the king's archers at the risk of his own by making himself a living bridge over the Gangā, or that of the noble parrot who laid down his life for his friends in a futile attempt to quench a forest fire by drops of water scattered from his wings.

(III) JAINISM AND OTHER UNORTHODOX SECTS

*Jainism*

Among the many unorthodox teachers who were contemporary with the Buddha was Vardhamāna, known to his followers as *Mahāvira* ("the Great Hero"). Jainism, the "Religion of the Conquerors" (*jinas*), which he founded, had a history very different from that of Buddhism. It succeeded in establishing itself firmly, and in

...the best of going  
...mantle of legend  
...when mantles are removed only vague shadow  
...remain

for their children they made cattle with movable heads, model monkeys which would slide down a string, little toy carts, and whistles shaped like birds, all of clay... harappan people, of narrow-nosed, slender mediterranean type

50 years in print



when the end came would seem most of them had fled a group of huddled skeletons and a woman h  
steps of a wall suggest that a few stragglers were overtaken by the invaders.

a 1 basham  
**WONDER** that was india

stay for a while over the thickets, haunted by the cries of the hill folk, then  
press on with faster pace, having shed your load of rain, and you'll see the  
narmada river, scattered in torrents, by the jagged rocks at the foot of the  
...  
looking like the plastered pattern of stripes on the trunk of an elephant.

foreword by thomas r. trautmann

some places became very influential, but it never spread beyond India. Unlike Buddhism, there were no fundamental changes and developments in Jaina doctrine. But though the history of Jainism is less interesting than that of Buddhism, and though it was never so important, it survived in the land of its birth, where it still has some two million adherents, mostly well-to-do merchants.

The legends of Vardhamāna Mahāvīra are less attractive than those of the Buddha and are even more formalized and unreliable, but as he is referred to in the Buddhist scriptures as one of the Buddha's chief opponents his historicity is beyond doubt. He was born about 540 B.C. and was the son of Siddhārtha, a chief of the clan of Jñātrikas, the associates of the Licchavis of Vaiśālī; his mother, Trīśālā, was the sister of the Licchavi chief Ceṭaka, and thus, like the Buddha, he was wholly the product of the oligarchic martial clans which were a powerful political force at the time. Though he was educated as a prince, and married and had a daughter, his real interest lay in the quest for salvation. At the age of thirty, when his parents were dead, he left his home for a life of asceticism. At first he followed the practices of an ascetic group called the *Nirgranthas* ("Free from Bonds"), which had been founded some 200 years earlier by a certain Pārśva. The term *Nirgrantha* was later used for the members of the order which Mahāvīra founded, and Pārśva was remembered as the twenty-third of the twenty-four great teachers or *Tirthankaras* ("Ford-makers") of the Jaina faith.

For over twelve years Vardhamāna wandered from place to place, begging his food, meditating, disputing, and subjecting his body to austerities of all kinds. At first he wore a single garment which he never changed, but after thirteen months he laid this encumbrance aside, and the rest of his life was spent in complete nudity. For some six years his hardships were shared by another ascetic, Gośāla Maskarīputra, but ultimately the two quarrelled, and Gośāla left Vardhamāna to found the sect of Ājīvikas.

In the thirteenth year of his asceticism Vardhamāna found full enlightenment and Nirvāṇa; he became a "Worthy" (*Arhant*), a "Conqueror" (*Jina*), a "Ford-maker". He soon gained a great reputation and a large band of followers, and for thirty years he taught in the Gangetic kingdoms, patronized by the very kings who also patronized the Buddha. He survived the death of his chief rival, Gośāla, and probably also that of the Buddha, and died of self-starvation at the age of seventy-two in the little town of Pāvā, near the Magadhan capital Rājagṛha. There are conflicting traditions about the date of his death, which was probably in 468 B.C.

For some two centuries the Jainas remained a small community of

monks and lay followers, less important than the rival sect of the Ājīvikas. According to a strongly held Jaina tradition Candragupta Maurya joined their order as a monk on his abdication, and it seems certain that there was an accession of strength in Maurya times. A serious famine at the end of Candragupta's reign led to a great exodus of Jaina monks from the Gangā Valley to the Deccan, where they established important centres of their faith.

Out of this migration arose the great schism of Jainism, on a point of monastic discipline. Bhadrabāhu, the elder of the community, who led the emigrants, insisted on the retention of the rule of nudity which Mahāvīra had established. Sthūlabhadra, the leader of the monks who remained in the North, allowed his followers to wear white garments, owing to the hardships and confusions of the famine. Hence arose the two sects of the Jainas, the *Digambaras* ("Space-clad", i.e. naked), and the *Śvetāmbaras* ("White-clad"). The schism did not become final until the 1st century A.D., and there were never any fundamental doctrinal differences; later most monks of the naked sect took to wearing robes in public, but the division has persisted down to the present day.

According to tradition an oral sacred literature had been passed down from the days of Mahāvīra, but Bhadrabāhu was the last person to know it perfectly. On his death Sthūlabhadra called a great council at Pāṭaliputra, and the canon was reconstructed as best possible in twelve *Āṅgas*, or sections, which replaced the fourteen "former texts" (*Pūrvas*). This canon was accepted only by the Śvetāmbaras; the Digambaras claimed that the old canon was hopelessly lost, and proceeded to devise new scriptures for themselves, some of which are still unpublished. The texts of the Śvetāmbara canon were finally settled and reduced to writing at a council at Valabhī in Gujarāt in the 5th century A.D. By this time the texts had become very corrupt and one of the *Āṅgas* had been completely lost, while new material had been added to the original canon in the form of the twelve *Upāṅgas*, or minor sections, and various lesser works. In the Middle Ages a great body of commentarial literature was written both in Prakrit and Sanskrit, and there were many able philosopher monks, who interpreted the scriptures of the sect. Some monks turned their attention to secular literature and other branches of learning, apparently without losing their piety. One of the last great poets in Sanskrit, Nayacandra, of the 14th century (p. 433f), was a Jaina monk, as was Mallinātha, the author of the standard commentary on the poems of Kālidāsa. We owe much to the Jaina monks' love of literature. To copy a manuscript, even a secular one, was considered a work of great religious merit, and thus the old Jaina monasteries of

Western India have preserved many rare and otherwise unknown texts, some of which have still to be published and many of which are of non-Jaina origin.

In the period between the Mauryas and the Guptas Jainism can be traced from Orissā in the East to Mathurā in the West, but in later times it was chiefly concentrated in two regions—Gujarāt and parts of Rājasthān, where the Śvetāmbara sect prevailed, and the central part of the Peninsula, the modern Mysore, where the Digambaras were dominant. The Gangā Valley, the original home of Jainism, was little affected by it.

The Śvetāmbaras found much support among the chiefs of Western India, and gained a position of great prominence during the reign of the Caulukya king Kumārapāla, who ruled Gujarāt in the 12th century. Under the guidance of a great Jaina scholar, Hemacandra, Kumārapāla is said to have instituted a Jaina reformation; but on his death the sect lost much of its influence, and though it still flourished it never again became so important. Similarly in the South the Digambaras had great influence in the early Middle Ages, thanks to the patronage of kings, but this influence gradually diminished as that of devotional Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism grew. There are traditions, which some have doubted but which we believe to have a basis of fact, that the Jainas were sometimes severely persecuted. But although Jainism declined it never disappeared.

Though the Jaina scriptures are comparatively late in their final form, there is little divergence in fundamentals between the two great Jaina sects; thus it seems that the basic teachings of both are very ancient indeed, and are essentially those of Mahāvīra himself. Jainism, like Buddhism, is fundamentally atheistic in that, while not denying the existence of the gods, it refuses them any important part in the universal scheme. The world, for the Jaina, is not created, maintained or destroyed by a personal deity, but functions only according to universal law.

The universe is eternal. Its existence is divided into an infinite number of cycles, each consisting of a period of improvement (*utsarpiṇī*), and one of decline (*avasarpīṇī*). Each period is to all intents and purposes like the last, containing twenty-four *Tīrthaṅkaras*, twelve Universal Emperors (*Cakravartins*), both classes being included in the total of sixty-three Great Men (*Śālāka-puruṣas*), who live at regular intervals in the cycle. At the peak period men are of enormous size and reach a tremendous age. They have no need of laws or property, for wishing-trees (*kalpa-vṛkṣa*) give them all they need for the asking. At present the world is rapidly declining. The last *Tīrthaṅkara* of this age has passed to final Nirvāṇa, and gradually

true religion will be lost—Mahāvīra in his omniscience even gave his followers the name and address of the last Jaina of this æon. The process of decline will continue for 40,000 years, when men will be dwarfs in stature, with a life of only twenty years, and will dwell in caves, having forgotten all culture, even to the use of fire. Then the tide will turn, and they will begin to improve again, only to decline once more, and so on for all eternity. Unlike the cosmology of the Buddhists and Hindus, that of the Jainas involves no cataclysms of universal destruction.

The universe functions through the interaction of living souls (*jīvas*, literally "lives"), and five categories of non-living entities (*ajīva*): "ether" (*ākāśa*), the means or condition of movement (*dharma*), the means or condition of rest (*adharmā*),\* time (*kāla*), and matter (*puṅgala*). Souls are not only the property of animal and plant life, but also of entities such as stones, rocks, running water, and many other natural objects not looked on as living by other sects.

The soul is naturally bright, all-knowing and blissful. There are an infinite number of souls in the universe, all fundamentally equal, but differing owing to the adherence of matter in a fine atomic form. This subtle matter, quite invisible to the human eye, is *karma*, the immaterial entity of other systems interpreted materialistically. The naturally bright soul becomes dulled and clouded over by karmic matter and thus acquires first a spiritual and then a material body. The obfuscation of the soul is compared to the gradual clouding of a bright oily surface by motes of dust. Karma adheres to the soul as a result of activity. Any and every activity induces karma of some kind, but deeds of a cruel and selfish nature induce more, and more durable, karma than others. The karma already acquired leads to the acquisition of further karma, and thus the cycle of transmigration continues indefinitely.

On these premisses transmigration can only be escaped by dispelling the karma already adhering to the soul and by ensuring that no more is acquired. This is a slow and difficult process and it is believed that many souls will never succeed in accomplishing it, but will continue to transmigrate for all eternity. The annihilation (*nirjarā*) of karma comes about through penance, and the prevention (*saṃvara*) of the influx (*āśrava*) and fixation (*bandha*)† of karma in the soul is ensured by carefully disciplined conduct, as a result of which it does not

\* Like the Buddhists the Jainas gave to these familiar terms very special connotations, the full discussion of which is beyond the scope of this work. *Dharma* is a sort of secondary space which permits movement, as water permits a fish to swim; *adharmā* is a tertiary space which permits rest.

† We quote these four Sanskrit terms as, with *jīva* (souls), *ajīva* (the five categories mentioned earlier), and salvation (*mokṣa*), they constitute the seven fundamental categories (*tattva*) of Jainism.

enter in dangerous quantities and is dispersed immediately. When the soul has finally set itself free it rises at once above the highest heaven to the top of the universe, where it remains in inactive omniscient bliss through all eternity. This, for the Jainas, is Nirvāṇa.

Though Jaina philosophers developed their doctrines, and evolved a theory of epistemology of great subtlety (p. 504f) and a remarkable view of space and time suggesting the world picture of relativity physics, their fundamental teachings remained essentially unaltered. Mahāvīra and the twenty-three other Tīrthaṅkaras were adored in the same way as the Buddha and the Hindu gods, but Jainism never compromised in its atheism, and there was no development in this sect comparable to the Great Vehicle in Buddhism. Jainism has survived for over 2,000 years on the basis of these austere teachings alone.

Full salvation is not possible to the layman. In this Jainism differs from Buddhism and Hinduism, which concede it in exceptional cases. To attain Nirvāṇa a man must abandon all trammels, including his clothes. Only by a long course of fasting, self-mortification, study and meditation, can he rid himself of karma, and only by the most rigorous discipline can he prevent fresh karma from clinging to his soul. Hence a monastic life is essential for salvation. Very early, however, many Jaina monks gave up the rule of nudity, and today few if any monks, even of the Digambara sect, practise it regularly. Both sects of Jainas, however, would admit that it is necessary to full liberation. The universe is now rapidly declining, and no souls now reach Nirvāṇa or have any hope of reaching it in the foreseeable future, so in these degenerate days clothes are worn as a concession to human frailty.

The regimen of the Jaina monk was, and still is, strict in the extreme. At his initiation his hair was not shaved, but pulled out by the roots. He subjected himself to many hardships, such as meditating in the full sunlight of the Indian summer, or maintaining an uneasy posture for long periods on end, though Jainism did not permit the more spectacular penances of some Hindu ascetics. The monk's frugal meals were interrupted by numerous fasts, and many monks starved themselves to death, following the example of Mahāvīra himself.

The life of the monk was governed by five vows, abjuring killing, stealing, lying, sexual activity and the possession of property. These vows were interpreted quite strictly. Acts of violence and killing, whether intentional or not, were the most potent cause of the influx of karma, and were therefore particularly to be avoided. Meat-eating was quite forbidden to monk and layman alike. Even insect life was carefully protected. Like the Buddhist monks, the Jainas strained their drinking-water to save the lives of animalculæ. Jaina monks

usually carried feather dusters, to brush ants and other insects from their path and save them from being trampled underfoot, and they wore veils over their mouths, to prevent the minute living things in the air from being inhaled and killed. No lay Jaina could take up the profession of agriculture, since this involved not only the destruction of plant life, but also of many living beings in the soil itself. Kindling a light or fire was not permitted by the monk, since it destroyed lives both in the fuel and in the surrounding air, while putting a fire out was also forbidden, since it destroyed the life of the fire itself. Thus, in its insistence on ahimsā, or non-violence, Jainism went much further than any other Indian religion.

It has been suggested that Jainism survived in India, whereas Buddhism perished, because the former sect took better care of its layfolk. In Jainism the layman was a definite member of the Order, encouraged to undertake periodical retreats and to live as far as possible the life of the monk for specific periods. Like Buddhism, Jainism encouraged the commercial virtues of honesty and frugality, and at a very early period the Jaina lay community became predominantly mercantile. The splendid Jaina temples at such places as Mount Ābū and Śravaṇa Beḷgoḷā are testimonies of the great wealth and piety of medieval Jaina laymen.

Jainism had no special social doctrines. The domestic rites of the layman, such as birth, marriage and death, were those of the Hindus. At one time Jainism maintained a cult of stūpas in the same way as Buddhism, but this has not survived, and early in the Christian era the Tīrthaṅkaras were adored in temples in the form of icons. By the Middle Ages this worship approximated to that of the Hindus, with offerings of flowers, incense, lamps and so on. As with Buddhism, the chief gods of the Hindus found their way into Jaina temples in subordinate positions, and though there was no real compromise with theism the sect easily fitted into the Hindu order, its members forming distinct castes.

Jaina religious literature is generally dull and pedantic, and its ethics, though they inculcate such virtues as honesty and mercy, tend to be negative and fundamentally selfish. The virtue of non-violence in Jainism often had little of love about it, but merely involved vegetarianism and precautions against the accidental killing of small animals. There are, however, passages in the Jaina scriptures which show warmth and human sympathy. Thus, discussing the doctrine of non-violence, the early *Ācārāṅga Sūtra* writes:

"A wise man should be neither glad nor angry, for he should know and consider the happiness of all things. . . . Life is dear to the many who own

fields and houses, who get dyed and coloured clothes and jewels and earrings, and grow attached to them. . . . Only those who are of controlled conduct do not desire these things; therefore, knowing birth and death, you should firmly walk the path.

"For nothing is inaccessible to death, and all beings are fond of themselves, they love pleasure and hate pain, they shun destruction and cling to life. They long to live. To all things life is dear."<sup>49</sup>

More typical of Jaina moral teachings are the following verses, said to have been spoken by Mahāvīra to Gautama, one of his disciples (not, of course, to be confused with Gautama the Buddha).

"As the dead leaf when its time is up  
falls from the tree to the ground,  
so is the life of man.  
Gautama, always be watchful!

"As the dewdrop that sways on a blade of grass  
lasts but a moment,  
so is the life of man.  
Gautama, always be watchful!

"For the soul which suffers for its carelessness  
is whirled about in the universe,  
through good and evil karma.  
Gautama, always be watchful!

"When the body grows old and the hair turns white,  
and all the vital powers decrease . . .  
despondency and disease befall, and the flesh wastes and decays.  
Gautama, always be watchful!

"So cast away all attachments,  
and be pure as a lotus, or as water in autumn.  
Free from every attachment,  
Gautama, always be watchful!"<sup>50</sup>

As an example of Digambara teaching we give a few verses, remarkable for their conciseness, by the 4th century monk Pūjyapāda.

"Body, house, wealth and wife,  
sons and friends and enemies—  
all are different from the soul.  
Only the fool thinks them his own."

"From all directions come the birds  
and rest together in the trees;  
but in the morning each goes his own way,  
flying in all directions."

"Death is not for me. Why then should I fear?  
Disease is not for me. Why then should I despair?  
I am not a child, nor a youth, nor an old man—  
All these states are only of my body."

"Time and again in my foolishness I have enjoyed  
all kinds of body and have discarded them.  
Now I am wise!  
Why should I long for rubbish?"

"The soul is one thing, matter another—  
that is the quintessence of truth.  
Whatever else may be said  
is merely its elaboration."<sup>51</sup>

### *The Ājīvikas*

A third unorthodox sect which emerged at the same time as Buddhism and Jainism was that of the Ājīvikas, a body of ascetics who were under a rigorous discipline similar to that of the Jainas, and who also practised complete nudity. The doctrines of the founder of the sect, Gośāla Maskarīputra, bear a generic likeness to those of his contemporary and former friend Mahāvīra. Like Mahāvīra, he looked back to earlier teachers and ascetic groups, whose doctrines he refurbished and developed. According to both Buddhist and Jaina tradition he was of humble birth; he died a year or so before the Buddha, about 487 B.C., after a fierce altercation with Mahāvīra in the city of Śrāvastī. His followers seem to have combined with those of other teachers, such as Pūraṇa Kāśyapa the antinomian and Pakudha Kātyāyana the atomist, to form the Ājīvika sect. After a period of prosperity in Mauryan times, when Aśoka and his successor Daśaratha presented caves to the Ājīvikas, the sect rapidly declined, and only retained some local importance in a small region of Eastern Mysore and the adjacent parts of Madras, where it survived until the 14th century, after which we hear no more of it.

No scriptures of the Ājīvikas have come down to us, and the little we know about them has to be reconstructed from the polemic literature of Buddhism and Jainism. The sect was certainly atheistic, and its main feature was strict determinism. The usual doctrine of karma taught that though a man's present condition was determined by his past actions he could influence his destiny, in this life and the future, by choosing the right course of conduct. This the Ājīvikas denied. The whole universe was conditioned and determined to the smallest detail by an impersonal cosmic principle, *Niyati*, or destiny. It was impossible to influence the course of transmigration in any way.

"All that have breath, all that are born, all that have life, are without power, strength or virtue, but are developed by destiny, chance and nature, and experience joy and sorrow in the six classes [of existence]. There are . . . 8,400,000 great æons (*mahākappa*), through which fool and wise alike must take their course and make an end of sorrow. There is no [question of] bringing unripe karma to fruition, nor of exhausting karma already ripened, by virtuous conduct, by vows, by penance, or by chastity. That cannot be done. *Samsāra* is measured as with a bushel, with its joy and sorrow and its appointed end. It can neither be lessened nor increased, nor is there any excess or deficiency of it. Just as a ball of string will, when thrown, unwind to its full length, so fool and wise alike will take their course, and make an end of sorrow."<sup>52</sup>

Though nothing that a man could do would in any way influence his future lot Ājīvika monks practised severe asceticism, because the force of destiny compelled them to do so, although their religious opponents accused them of licentiousness and immorality.

The Dravidian Ājīvikas developed their doctrines in a way resembling Buddhism of the Great Vehicle. Gośāla became an ineffable divinity, like the Buddha in the Mahāyāna system, while the doctrine of destiny evolved into a Parmenidean view that all change and movement were illusory, and that the world was in reality eternally and immovably at rest. This view bears a certain resemblance to Nāgārjuna's doctrine of "the Void".

#### *Scepticism and Materialism*

Buddha, Mahāvīra, Gośāla, and many lesser teachers of their period ignored the gods, but they were not thoroughgoing atheists and materialists. All admitted the existence of supernatural beings of strictly limited powers, and all accepted the fundamental doctrine of transmigration, though they interpreted its mechanics individually. Some thinkers, however, rejected all immaterial categories completely, and their influence may have been wider than appears from the religious texts of the period. In the fairly early *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* the interlocutor Naciketas (p. 158) questions Yama, the god of death, in these terms: "There is doubt about the state of a man who is dead—some say he is, others, he is not." "On this point", Yama replies, "even the gods formerly had their doubts. It is not easy to understand." At this time unbelief must have been fairly widespread.

Ajita Keśakambalin ("Ajita of the Hair-blanket", no doubt so called from the garb of his order), a contemporary of the Buddha, was the earliest known teacher of complete materialism.

"Man," he said, "is formed of the four elements. When he dies earth returns to the aggregate of earth, water to water, fire to fire, and air to air, while his senses vanish into space. Four men with the bier take up the

corpse; they gossip [about the dead man] as far as the burning-ground, where his bones turn the colour of a dove's wing and his sacrifices end in ashes. They are fools who preach almsgiving, and those who maintain the existence [of immaterial categories] speak vain and lying nonsense. When the body dies both fool and wise alike are cut off and perish. They do not survive after death."<sup>53</sup>

If we are to believe the Buddhist scriptures, Ajita founded a sect of monks. The Buddha condemned them as having no good motive for their asceticism, the degree of which is nowhere made clear. It is possible that, like the Epicureans, they were not so much an ascetic order as a fraternity of men with common aims, cultivating together the simpler pleasures of life. In any case, an element of materialism is traceable in Indian thought from this time onwards. Religious and philosophical literature, whether Hindu, Buddhist or Jaina, devotes much space to attacking the evil tenets of the *Cārvākas* or *Lokāyatas*, as the materialist schools were called. Throughout the period which we treat these unbelievers are referred to with scorn and disapprobation which sometimes seems to contain an undertone of fear, as though the pious authors thought it really possible that the materialists might shake the foundations of the established order. Materialist and irreligious undercurrents are traceable in some secular literature, such as the *Arthaśāstra* and the *Kāmasūtra*.

The general attitude of the materialist schools, according to their adversaries, was that all religious observance and morality were futile. A man should make the most of life and get what happiness he could out of it. The frugal virtues of Buddhism and Jainism were rejected.

"As long as he lives a man should live happily  
and drink ghee, though he run into debt,  
for when the body is turned to ashes  
how can there be any return to life?"<sup>54</sup>

A man must not turn back from pleasure for fear of concomitant sorrow. He must accept occasional sorrow gladly, for the sake of the joy which he finds in the world, as he accepts the bones with the fish or the husk with the corn. "Whoever turns in fear from the joy that he sees before him is a fool, no better than an animal."<sup>55</sup>

Their opponents ascribe only base ideals to the materialists, and there is no definite evidence that they had any ethical doctrines, but one verse attributed to them shows that they were not blind to the warm ties of family and friendship.

"If a man really left his body,  
and passed on to the other world,  
would he not come back once more,  
drawn by his love for his kin?"<sup>56</sup>

Besides numerous quotations attributed to materialists in religious and philosophical works one anti-religious philosophical text has survived. This is the *Tattvopaplavasīṃha* (freely "The Lion Destroying all Religious Truth") written by a certain Jayarāśi in the 8th century A.D. The author was an out-and-out Pyrrhonist denying the possibility of any certain knowledge at all, and he demolished with able dialectic, to his own satisfaction at any rate, all the basic presuppositions of the chief religious systems of his day.

#### (IV) HINDUISM

##### *Development and Literature*

As well as the aristocratic religion of the brāhman̄s, the Buddhist and Jaina scriptures mention popular cults, connected with earth-spirits (*yakṣas*), snake-spirits (*nāgas*), and other minor deities, centred round sacred spots or caityas (p. 264). Very early a god named Vāsudeva was widely worshipped, especially in Western India. It was to this god that the Besnagar column, to which we have more than once referred, was erected. The inscription on the column shows that by the end of the 2nd century B.C. the cult of Vāsudeva was receiving the support of the ruling classes, and even of the Western invaders. Soon after this Vāsudeva was identified with the Vedic god Viṣṇu, if indeed the identification had not already been made, and further syncretisms were taking place. Nārāyaṇa, a god of obscure origin mentioned in the Brāhmaṇa literature, was also identified with Viṣṇu, whose name was by now closely connected with that of Kṛṣṇa, one of the heroes of the martial traditions which were brought together to form the great epic, the *Mahābhārata*.

The character of Viṣṇu, and those of the gods associated with him, developed through the centuries, as further popular divinities were in one way or another identified with him. Among some of the lower orders theriomorphic cults prevailed, especially in parts of Mālwā, where a divinity in the form of a boar was worshipped. By Gupta times the cult of the divine boar was assimilated to that of Viṣṇu. A pastoral flute-playing deity, popular among herdsmen and of uncertain origin, was identified with the hero Kṛṣṇa, by now recognized as an incarnation of Viṣṇu. The Brāhmaṇic hero Paraśurāma was similarly accounted for, while later Rāma, the hero of the second great Indian epic, was also brought into the Vaiṣṇavite pantheon.

Simultaneously a fertility deity, whose cult may have been kept alive in non-brāhmaṇic circles from the days of the Harappā culture, rose in prominence. This was Śiva, identified with the Vedic Rudra and usually worshipped in the form of the phallic emblem (*liṅga*).