Jainism and Buddhism had been no doubt popular in different ways in Andhra for a long time. But they could not claim universal appeal. Many of the ancient beliefs and practices besides Vedic ritualism that had held the field before the advent of the above religions continued in existence.

Contemporaneous with Jainism and Buddhism, another religion, known as Bhāgavatism developed in the land. This too emerged out of the discontent towards the decadent Vedic ritualism. It appears to have been mostly developed by the Kṣatriyas. Devotion to a personal god is the central point of Bhāgavatism and some trace in its origins the influence of non-Āryan cults based upon image-worship.

With so many faiths in the field, India of the 5th century B.C. passed through a tremendous spiritual crisis. It was an age of mutual influence and rivalry, rationalisation and adjustment.

1. The Bhagavadgītā wherein the doctrines of this school received their earliest and best exposition is held to be Kṣatriya in origin. According to the tradition it is the product of the battle of Kurukṣetra. In fact the Mahābhārata war was one between the champions of Brāhmanism and those of Bhāgavatism. Śiṅgēla and the Kauravas were the opponents of the Bhāgavata cult. The victory of Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna was the victory of the Bhāgavata-Kṛṣna cult. The Bhagavadgītā is said to have been passed on to Pitamaha and thence to Baliya, Vivasvat, Vahu and Ikvāhu and all of them are held to be Kṣatriyas.
conciliation and compromise. Very early Jainism and Buddhism progressed and expanded making wise compromises with the primitive beliefs in the land. Buddhism even adapted itself to the requirements of foreigners like the Indo-Bactrians and became popular with them. Especially the later forms of Buddhism, Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna were only the results of such adjustments. In such circumstances the Brahmānical religion could no longer retain its exclusiveness and its flexible nature began to assert itself. As early as the later Vedic times, the Brāhmīns showed capacty for assimilating foreign influences. Now, to check the advance of the atheistic religions and to counter their influence, the Brahmical priests made compromise with Bhāgavatism. Eliason remarks "Bhāgavatism became popular because of the struggle for life and death between Brāhmanism and Buddhism. In order to combat the purely atheistic Buddhist, the pantheistic Brāhmanist won over to their side the monotheistic Bhāgavata and the price they paid was the identification of Vāsudava with Viṣṇu of their pantheon." Charles Eliot praises the wisdom of the Brāhmins in making such compromises. "In critical and revolutionary times, the Brāhmins have often assured their pre-eminence by the judicious recognition of heresies. In all ages, there has been a conservative clique which restricted religion to ceremonial observances. Again and again, some intellectual or emotional outburst has swept away such narrow limits and proclaimed doctrines which seemed

1. Vide Supra, Sections on Mahayana and Vajrayana.
2. Vide Supra, Ch. IV.
subversive of orthodoxy of the day. But they have simply become
orthodoxy of the morrow, under the protection of the same Brähmin
caste. The assailants are turned into champions, in time the
bold reformers stiffen into antiquated saints." The compromise
with Bhāgavatism more than justified the Brāhmanical expectations.
Even foreigners, especially the Greeks, began to prefer the Dharma
cults to the atheistic religions and could find the counterparts of
their pagan gods in Śiva and Viṣṇu.

By a laborious process of tolerating, adopting and wherever
necessary originating, the Brāhmans of the age set their seal of
approval on diverse beliefs and practices. It was during this
period of anxiety for self-preservation, there was produced an
eraous quantity of Śmarta literature, comprising the Śūtras, the
Dharmaśāstras, the Epics and the Purāṇas, which clearly reflect
the process of adjustment, compromise and synthesis.

The Dharma Śūtras of Āpastamba, which were produced in
Andhradāsa, give official recognition to the new developments.
The Śūtrakāras generally appear to be conservative, but they are
only progressively conservative and in them one cannot but find
flexibility behind the seeming exterior rigidity. Āpastamba
declares that the popular arts and lores which were current among

1. Megasthenes describes two Indian gods, Dionysus and Heracles
who are identified with Śiva and Kṛṣṇa.
2. Radhakrishnan says that after the rise of Buddhism, the
followers of the Vedic Dharma were called upon to review and
recast all the knowledge they possessed, prove its soundness
and embody it in the form of the Śūtras. Jainism, of about
the 4th century B.C. systematised the rules of Mimamsā.
History of Indian Philosophy, II, p. 272-275.
3. Vide Supra, Ch. IV.
women and Sudras are to be brought under the fourth Veda, the Atharva. With the result, most of the primitive practices were conceded the dignified position of a Veda. It is well known that "the Atharvaveda consists mainly of magical spells and incantations in verse --- it possesses, however, an atmosphere of simple animism and sympathetic magic on a lower cultural level than that of the Rigveda, deriving from the plebian religion of the Aryans and containing many non-Aryan elements." Further, Apastamba quotes the Puranas as authorities on matters of religious practice. Finally, he recognizes the path of knowledge; but he refutes the doctrine of Jnana as the sole means of welfare. He was in favour of combining the observances of Dharma or Karma-marga with Jnana or Jnanamarga. Jaimini the Mimamsaka also admitted the validity of Upasana in his Devakanda.

The Cathasaptasati appears to be a typical product of the times in which a synthesis of the diverse religious practices was attempted under the hegemony of Brahmanical priests and sanctioned by a large quantity of theological literature. The Saptasati contains references to sacrificial fires, to monks prostrating before the Buddha (probably an image), to the temples of the Village Goddess and buffalo sacrifices to her, to the Siva and Vaisnava legends and to Ustras.

2. A.L. Basham, The Wonder that was India, P. 232.
3. Apastamba Dharma Sutras, II, 9, 9, 24, 6.
4. Ibid. II, 9, 21.
6. Vide Supra, Sources.
7. Vide Infra, Ch. XVII.
The evidence of the Saptasati thus proves that diverse elements "ranging from the most subtle and abstruse systems of philosophy to primitive forms of animism" and were recognized through the Purāṇas. The result was the religion we today call HINDUISM. It is because of its diverse nature Hinduism is rightly held to be impossible to define. As Radhakrishnan has aptly put it, Hinduism meant different things to different people—a name without a content, a museum of beliefs, medley of rites, a mere map or geographical expression.

Hinduism is no doubt a conglomeration of castes and creeds and sects, each with a bundle of beliefs, at times divergent, and indulging in the worship of numerous gods and goddesses. But, there are three schools of basic importance in Hinduism and to one or the other of them each of the above sects would generally conform. They are: (1) The Karmamārga or the path of action. It is essentially Vedic or śrauta and is elaborated in the Viśeṣākṣara literature. Originally, the aim of life for the Viśeṣākṣara is

3. Bhārataśāstra śrīyaḥ pumāṅga nāduvandpa pradīptiḥ
śrīca dīvārganā yuktā nādā karāṃpi karvate.
Śrīmadvēryāna, Ibid.
4. The original Viśeṣākṣara sūtras are attributed to Jaimini of the 4th century B.C. During the Gupta period Bhaṭṭasākhyā wrote Bṛhadāranyak on them. Later, in the 5th century, Kumārila wrote commentaries on that Bṛhā. "The importance of the Viśeṣākṣara literature for a Hindu is indeed great. For not only the Vedic duties to be performed according to its maxims but even Śruti literatures which regulate the duties, ceremonial and rituals of Hindus even at the present day are all guided and explained by them. The legal side of the Bṛhati consisting of inheritance, property rights, adoption, etc. -- is explained according to the Viśeṣākṣara maxims."
happy existence in heaven, which is the fruit of good Karma. The
duration of that happiness depends on the extent of the merit of
the Karma. (ii) The Shaktimarga: It is popularised by Dhārayavism
and Sārūnya, Sārūnya and Sājuyya with the favourite god is its
aim. (iii) Jñānāmārga: or the path of Knowledge: It comes down
from the Upanisads and is elaborated in the Uteramāssas or
Vedanta. Release from Samsara or the cycle of births or mokṣa and
becoming identical with the Universal Soul or Brahman is its aim.

The Smārta movement, starting with the Dharmāstras,
attempted at a synthesis of the three Mārgas. It is already
noted that Āpastamba preferred to combine the Śāṅkha and Varnā-
mārga whereas Jainin recognised Šakti or Upāsana. The Purāṇas,
whose development may be dated from the time of Āpastamba made a
deliberate attempt "to bring the theistic religions like Vaishnavism and Šaivism within the pale of orthodoxy by combining the
new doctrines with a respect for Vedic rituals, customs and
beliefs, especially the orthodox ideas of caste and order (varnā-
śāstrams)." The inscriptions of the early centuries before and
after Christ from the Nārca and Andhra clearly show that the
above schools developed supplementing each other, but not to the
exclusion of or at the expense of one another. The first recorded
evidence of the compromise between Vedic rituals and Mahāvānism

1. Vide Supra, P. 87.
comes from the Rānaghat inscription of Nāgarī of the 2nd century
1 B.C. The Mālik inscriptions of Kṣaharāṭa Uṣavadāta and Gautami
2 Bālānī clearly indicate the preference shown by the rulers to the
3 puranic "good acts" including gifts, pilgrimages and fasts. Sānta-
4 mūla, the founder of the Ikṣvāku independence was an Āvānādhīn
5 and at the same time a devotee of Mahāsena-Virūpākṣa. Among the
6 kings of the age there were those who took the titles — Parama-
7 bāhāgavata, Paramabrahmānya and Paramabhaṭṭāraka, at times all the
titles by the same. The term Paramabāhāgavata means one who is
devoted to a Brahma; the term Brahmanya means befitting a Bra-
8 min or of priestly or ascetic character; the term Bhaṭṭāraka
9 means respectful or worshipful and is used to saints and religious
teachers or great scholars, thus denoting Paramabhaṭṭāraka's faith
in Īśānaśīla. The Ikṣvāku king Sāntamūla as noted above was an
7 Āvānādhīn but was devoted to Mahāsena-Virūpākṣa. The Śālakāyana
king Vijayadeva-warman too was both an Āvānādhīn and a Para-
8 māhāśāvāra. The Eastern Chālukya king, Vīṇavardhana I had the
9 titles Paramabāhāgavata and Paramabrahmānya. Anavarāja Viṣaya-
sītya of the same dynasty had all the three titles — Para-

2. Ibid. p. 160 ff.
3. Ibid. p. 196 ff.
6. D.C. Sircar, "Vamadeva, the Śālva Saint", I.E.S.C., XIV,
PP. 95-100.
bhāgavata, āramaśāhśāmya and āramaśāhātāśa, which indicate respectively the ōhēkti, the kārmic and the ājñāma mārgas. Such a happy compromise between the different paths progressed till it culminated in the evolution of the syncretic Hindu Vēdānta under the leadership of ācjñāma Sākara during the 9th century A.D. With Sākara, the smārta system reached great heights and the pure śrauta recedes into the background. This tendency is dominant in all the subsequent religious developments in India as a whole.

1. Çeviṭikuru plates, which are found recently and are with me awaiting publication.