

Philologists have found in true Sanskrit abundant resemblances to roots of European languages. Each branch of the race developed many changes, but that one of them furnished names to order for all the others is a unique hypothesis. It is to be regretted in the interest of the theory that the resemblances had not been toned down to fainter lines; the average credulity of readers is overtaxed; the clever work is overdone.

After witnessing the completeness of this linguistic performance no one will be surprised to know that the leading New Testament incidents are reproduced almost entire. What is known as the "Krishna Cult" is worked to the greatest advantage. Nothing of originality is left to the Christ of Judea.

Among the demigods of the Hindu mythology Krishna figured as a good-natured and rollicking Bacchus. Nothing is known of him in the earlier Sanskrit literature, but in the epic known as the Mahabharata and in the Vishnu Purana he appears as an incarnation of Vishnu. After the rise of Buddhism, Hinduism had discovered its lack of a more sympathetic being than had yet appeared—a god among men who should unite with the powers of deity something like the Buddha's sympathy and pity.

Around Krishna, therefore, there grew up an increasing interest—not that he furnished an ethical model, for his history corresponded very nearly with that of the lascivious satyrs of the Roman mythology, but because he was warmly and sympathetically human. The Krishna Cult was not fully developed until the early centuries of the Christian era, and it proceeded along two lines. In its popular aspects it kept pace with the growing corruptions which appeared in the Tantras, and were illustrated in the immoral orgies of Siva worship. The festivals in honor of Krishna were, and to a very recent date have continued to be, occasions of unspeakable vice.

The other line of development was theoretical; Krishna was treated as a Divine Counsellor and friend in the Bhagavad Gita, which—though embracing older materials—was probably composed about the first or second century of our era, and the Bhagavad Gita has, in its high ethics, often been compared to the New Testament, though falling far enough below a parallel. But the legends by which Jaccoliot matches "Christna's" life with leading incidents in the life of Jesus were partly the growth of those later centuries in which Hinduism was brought in contact with Christianity in Southern India, and partly the probable work of our author's own subsidized pundits. Even if the scholarly criticism of Max Muller had not befallen this unfortunate author, the Frenchiness and pruriency with which he clothed the story of Adam and Eve ("Adima and Heva") in the Garden, as well as the general extravagance of his statements, would have aroused suspicion.