

Glossary

Provided by Swarnalatha Rangarajan

Acharya: Preceptor.

Adivasi: Original dweller, indigenous people of India.

Agni: An important Vedic god who has three forms: fire, lightning, and sun.

Ahimsa: Non-violence.

Akasha: Sky.

Al-Khidr: The “Green Man”; Prophet of Islamic and Pre-Islamic lore.

Andhaka: A demon in Hindu mythology who is slain by Siva, a blind person.

Antardasara: Inner figure of ten angles.

Annamaya kosha: The physical body, material aspect of creation. It is the first sheath of the five sheaths according to the Vedanta philosophy.

Apah: Water.

Apsara: Celestial nymph.

Aranya: Living or growing in the forest, wild.

Asteya: Non-stealing.

Ashta dala padma: Eight-petalled lotus structure.

Ashta-kona: Figure of eight corners.

Asura: Demon.

Atman: Term used within Hinduism and Vedanta that refers to the individual soul.

Ayurveda: The Science of Medicine.

Bahirdasara: Outer figure of ten angles.

Bala: Young. Aspect of the Mother Goddess in Hinduism worshipped as a young girl.

Bhagamalini: Manifestation of the Mother Goddess; associated with prosperity and fertility.

Bhupura: A square field representing the exterior of the yantra, usually associated with the earth element.

Bhuta: An element, the number “Five”, the past, a living creature, a ghost.

Bindu: Point, dot, seed, source, drop.

Brahman: A concept of Hinduism. The word is derived from the Sanskrit verb (brh= to grow) which signifies greatness. Brahman is the supreme spirit, unchanging, absolute, immanent principle which is the ground of all being.

Brahmaviharas: The four Brahmaviharas are a series of virtues and Buddhist meditation practices designed to cultivate those virtues.

Buddha: Gotama, also known as Shakyamuni, was a spiritual teacher from India and the founder of Buddhism.

Chakra: Wheel.

Chaturdasara: A figure of fourteen angles.

Chittakasha: Mental Space.

Darvaza: Door.

Deva: Deity, a celestial being.

Dharma: Established order, custom, and justice, virtue, moral merit.

Dosha: Faults, defects.

Dvara: Portal or gateway.

Dvesha: Strong aversion to someone or something.

Dvipa: Island.

Guna: Tendency. Three in number, according to Hindu philosophy.

Jagrat: Waking state of consciousness.

Jiva: The principle of life, personal soul.

Kabir: Mystic and poet of 15th century India revered by Hindus Muslims and Sikhs alike.

Kama-kala: Primary central triangle of the Sri Chakra, the seat of the Mother Goddess.

Kali Yuga: Age of vice, is one of the four stages of development that the world goes through as part of the cycle of Yugas as described in Indian scriptures.

Kamala: Lotus, also another name of Goddess.

Lakshmi: Goddess of Wealth.

Kameshwari: Aspect of the Mother Goddess associated with the moon and creation.

Kanchana: Gold, wealth.

Karuna: Compassion.

Kimnara: In Buddhist mythology a Kimnara is a celestial musician, half-human and half-bird.

Kona: Corner.

Kosha. A Sheath. Vedanta philosophy conceives the self as being covered in five sheaths. Also wealth, womb, globe.

Krishna: Hindu deity. Avatar of Vishnu, usually depicted as a young cowherd boy playing the flute, Krishna legends are extensively discussed in texts like the Mahabharata, Vishnu Purana, Bhagavata Purana and Harivamsa.

Krodha: Anger.

Kshatriya: Warrior. One of the four social orders in Hinduism.

Kshetra: Field. A place of pilgrimage; a place of origin, the Body.
Kshetra svarupa: Nature of the field.
Kshetrajna: Knower of the field, the soul.
Kshetresi: Mistress of the Field, the presiding deity.
Lalita: Beautiful one who plays.
Lobha: Greed.
Mahabhuta Mandala: The iconic representation of the five elemental forces.
Mahakasa: Boundless space or womb of all being.
Maheswara: The great God. One of the names of Lord Siva.
Mandala: Circle, a disc, a group, a district.
Mandala Vasini: Goddess who lives in the centre of the bindu.
Mangalam: Auspicious.
Manusmriti: The most important and earliest metrical work of the Dharmashastra textual tradition of Hinduism.
Marga: Path, road, right way.
Maya: Illusion.
Meru: Sacred mountain in Hindu, Buddhist, and Jain cosmology considered to be the centre of the universe.
Metta: Buddhist term meaning loving kindness.
Moha: Delusion.
Mohini: Deluder.
Moksha: Release, liberation, final emancipation.
Muditha: Joy.
Naiyayikas: Systematic exponents of Hindu orthodoxy.
Niyama: Codified set of behaviours in numerous Hindu scriptures like the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali.
Nyayasutras: The Nyaya Sutras are an ancient Indian text of philosophy composed by Gautama.

Pancha indriyas: The five sense organs.

Panchamahabhutas: The five primary/sacred elements of earth, water, fire, space and air.

Papatama: A sinful soul.

Paramasya nabhih: The navel of the Divine.

Pradhana: That which is first placed or in the primal position.

Prakriti: Primary matter, nature, the ultimate female principle.

Prana: Energy.

Pranayama: Yogic science of respiration.

Prithvi: The Hindu Earth and Mother Goddess who symbolizes the earth Element.

Pura: City

Purna: Complete, full.

Purusha: The ultimate male principle.

Raja: King.

Rajas: The force that upholds aspects of Nature like action, passion, excitement, and generation.

Rajya: Kingdom sovereignty.

Rakshasa: Demon.

Raga: Passionate attachment to sense of gratification.

Sadachara: Good conduct or behaviour of good people.

Sadharana-dharma: Duties applicable to all according to Manu Smrithi.

Sadasiva: A form of Siva which denotes the power of revealing grace.

Sadhu: Saint.

Sahasranama: A litany of thousand names.

Sama: Calmness, equanimity.

Samasthi: Wholeness.

Samhara: Destruction.

Samhriti: Withdrawal

Samkhya philosophy: One of the six orthodox systems of Indian philosophy; a dualistic, rational, and logical school of thought.

Sampradayas: Tradition, transmission, a philosophical or religious doctrine or lineage.

Samsara: The process of worldly life through successive births and deaths in Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and other related religions

Samskara: Sacraments, sacrifices, and rituals that serve as rites of passage.

Sangha: Meeting, company.

Sanjivin: Immortal.

Sarvanandamaya: That which is full of bliss.

Sarva: All, whole.

Satsang: The company of the highest truth or the company of a guru.

Sattva: Pure; the most rarefied of the three gunas.

Satya: Truth.

Satyagraha: Philosophy and practice of non-violent resistance conceived by M.K. Gandhi.

Sakti: Mother Goddess in the Hindu tradition. The universal principle of creative energy.

Siva: One of the three primary aspects of the divine in Hinduism, the supreme male principle associated with destruction and transformation.

Shanti: Peace.

Shodasa patra: Sixteen-petalled lotus structure.

Siddhi: Spiritual power, psychic ability.

Sifr: Nought, zero.

Smriti: Means “that which is remembered.” Refers to a specific body of Hindu religious scripture that was composed after the Vedas.

Sri: The sacred sound of cosmic auspiciousness and abundance (and affluence) in Hindu religion.

Srishti: Creation.

Sthithi: Preservation.

Suddha Vidya: The principle of wisdom from which the activities of creation and preservation emerge.

Susupti: Sleep state of consciousness.

Svapna: Dream state of consciousness.

Svasti: Contentment, ease, health.

Tamas: Force that promotes darkness, death, inertia, destruction, ignorance. The lowest of the three gunas.

Tanmatras: The five subtle energies of sound, touch, form, smell, and taste.

Tantra: Thread, loom, esoteric doctrine of knowledge belonging to the Agama school of scripture.

Tapasvini: A female ascetic.

Tattva: True state, truth, essential nature, an element.

Thirtha: Source, spring, holy place.

Thirthankara: A Jain saint

Tripura: Three impregnable cities of iron, silver, and gold in Indian mythology.

Tripurabhairavi: Terrifying aspect of the Mother Goddess who destroys evil and impurity.

Tripurasundari: The beautiful one. One of the ten goddesses in the Hindu pantheon referred to as the Dasamahvidyas.

Upekha/Upeksha: Equanimity.

Tushti: Satisfaction, pleasure.

Vajreshwari: Ferocious warrior goddess associated with thunder.

Vana: Sacred forest.

Vayu: Air.

Yagna: Ritual, sacrifice, offering, oblation. Practice of the Vedic times.

Yama: Self- restraint, code of conduct prescribed by Pantajali. Also the God of Death and Justice in Hindu mythology.

Yoga: To control, yoke, unite. Refers to traditional physical and mental disciplines originating from India.

Yogasutras: The greatest classical text from the yoga school of Indian philosophy is the Yoga Sutras by Patanjali, written in the second century BCE.