

Hinduism's Online Lexicon - A-Z Dictionary

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A

aadheenam: (Tamil) Endowment, foundation, institution, establishment, estate, property. A Saivite Hindu monastery and temple complex in the South Indian Saiva Siddhanta tradition. Also known as matha or pitha, as in Kailasa Pitha. The

aadheenam head, or pontiff, is called the Guru Mahasannidhanam or Aadheenakartha. See: monastery.

abhāsa: (Sanskrit) "Shining out; manifestation, emanation." The means by which Siva creates out of Himself, a concept central to monistic schools. See: emanation, tattva.

abhaya: (Sanskrit) Fearlessness, one of the cardinal virtues. "Fearlessness is the fruit of perfect Self Realization--that is, the recovery of nonduality" (Brihadaranyaka Upanishad 1.4.2). Also names the mudra (hand gesture) common in Hindu icons, betokening "fear not," in which the fingers of the right hand are raised and the palm faces forward. See: mudra, murti.

Abhinavagupta: (Sanskrit) Kashmir Saivite guru (ca 950-1015), scholar and adept in the lineage of Vasugupta. Among his philosophical writings, Pratyabhijna Vimarshini and Tantraloka are an important basis of Kashmir Saivism. Also an influential theoretician of poetics, dance, drama and classical music, he is said to have disappeared into a cave near Mangam along with 1,200 disciples. See: Kashmir Saivism.

abhisheka: (Sanskrit) "Sprinkling; ablution." Ritual bathing of the Deity's image with water, curd, milk, honey, ghee, rosewater, etc. A special form of puja prescribed by Agamic injunction. Also performed in the inauguration of religious and political monarchs and other special blessings. See: puja.

abhor (abhorrence): To detest, hate or find disgusting or repulsive and hence to pull back or shrink from.

abide: To stand firm, remain as one is. Not abandoning principles or qualities of character even in the face of difficulties.

abjuration: Renunciation, giving up by oath, as a sannyasin gives up family life. See: sannyasa dharma.

ablution: Snana. A washing of the body, especially as a religious ceremony.

abode: Home. Place where one lives or stays.

abortion: The deliberate termination of pregnancy. From the earliest times, Hindu tradition and scriptures condemn the practice, except when the mother's life is in danger. It is considered an act against rita and ahimsa. Hindu mysticism teaches that the fetus is a living, conscious person, needing and deserving protection (a Rig Vedic hymn [7.36.9, RvP, 2469] begs for protection of fetuses). The Kaushitaki Upanishad (3.1 UpR, 774) describes abortion as equivalent to killing one's parents. The Atharva Veda (6.113.2 HE, 43) lists the fetus slayer, brunaghi, among the greatest of sinners

(6.113.2). The Gautama Dharma Shastra (3.3.9 HD, 214) considers such participants to have lost caste. The Sushruta Samhita, a medical treatise (ca 100), stipulates what is to be done in case of serious problems during delivery (Chikitsasthana Chapter, Mudhagarbha), describing first the various steps to be taken to attempt to save both mother and child. "If the fetus is alive, one should attempt to remove it from the womb of the mother alive..." (sutra 5). If it is dead, it may be removed. In case the fetus is alive but cannot be safely delivered, surgical removal is forbidden for "one would harm both mother and offspring. In an irredeemable situation, it is best to cause the miscarriage of the fetus, for no means must be neglected which can prevent the loss of the mother" (sutras 10-11).

Absolute: Lower case (absolute): real, not dependent on anything else, not relative. Upper case (Absolute): Ultimate Reality, the unmanifest, unchanging and transcendent Parasiva--utterly nonrelational to even the most subtle level of consciousness. It is the Self God, the essence of man's soul. Same as Absolute Being and Absolute Reality. --**absolutely real:** A quality of God Siva in all three perfections: Parasiva, Parashakti and Parameshvara. As such, He is uncreated, unchanging, unevolutionary. See: Parameshvara, Parashakti, Parasiva.

absolution (to absolve): Forgiveness. A freeing from guilt so as to relieve someone from obligation or penalty. --**atone:** to compensate or make up for a wrongdoing. Atonement can only be done by the person himself, while absolution is granted by others, such as a family head, judge or jury. Exoneration, the taking away of all blame and all personal karmic burden, can only be given by God Siva. Society would naturally acknowledge and accept this inner transformation by forgiving and forgetting. See: penance, sin.

absorption: Taking in and making part of an existent whole. Known in Sanskrit as samhara, absorption is one of God's five powers (panchakritya), synonymous with destruction or dissolution, but with no negative or frightful implications. All form issues from God and eventually returns to Him. See: Maheshvara, Nataraja.

abstain: To hold oneself back, to refrain from or doing without. To avoid a desire, negative action or habit. See: yama-niyama.

abyss: A bottomless pit. The dark states of consciousness into which one may fall as a result of serious misbehavior; the seven chakras (psychic centers), or talas (realms of consciousness), below the muladhara chakra, which is located at the base of the spine. See: chakra, Naraka, loka.

accelerate: To increase the speed of a thing; to intensify its rate of progress.

accordant: In agreement or harmony with.

achara: (Sanskrit) "Conduct, mode of action, behavior; good conduct." Also, custom, tradition; rule of conduct, precept.

acharya: (Sanskrit) "Going toward;" "approaching." A highly respected teacher. The wise one who practices what he preaches. A title generally bestowed through diksha and ordination, such as in the Sivacharya priest tradition. See: diksha.

acosmic pantheism: "No-cosmos, all-is-God doctrine." A Western philosophical term for the philosophy of Shankara. It is acosmic in that it views the world, or cosmos, as ultimately unreal, and pantheistic because it teaches that God (Brahman) is all of existence. See: Shankara, shad darshana.

actinic: Spiritual, creating light. Adjective derived from the Greek aktis, "ray." Of or pertaining to consciousness in its pure, unadulterated state. Describes the extremely rarified superconscious realm of pure bindu, of quantum strings, the substratum of consciousness, shuddha maya, from which light first originates. Actinic is the adjective form of actinism, defined in the Oxford English Dictionary as: "1) the radiation of heat or light, or that branch of philosophy that treats of it; 2) that property or force in the sun's rays by which chemical changes are produced, as in photography." See: actinodic, kala, kosha, odic, tattva.

actinodic: Spiritual-magnetic. Describes consciousness within shuddhashuddha maya, which is a mixture of odic and actinic force, the spectrum of the anahata chakra, and to a certain degree the vishuddha chakra. See: tattva.

adept: Highly skilled; expert. In religion, one who has mastered certain spiritual practices or disciplines. An advanced yogi. See: siddha yoga.

adharma: (Sanskrit) "Unrighteousness." The opposite of dharma. Thoughts, words or deeds that transgress divine law. Irreligiousness; demerit. See: dharma, papa, sin Vaishnavism, victors and vanquished.

adhere: To remain attached or faithful, as to a leader, society, principle, etc.

adhyatma: (Sanskrit) "Spiritual; soul." The inner, spiritual self or spirit. See: atman.

adhyatma prasara: (Sanskrit) "Spiritual evolution." The gradual maturation of the soul body, anandamaya kosha, through many lives. Prasara means, "coming forth, spreading; advance, progress." See: evolution of the soul.

adhyatma vikasa: (Sanskrit) "Spiritual unfoldment." The blossoming of inner or higher (adhi), soul (atma) qualities as a result of religious striving, sadhana. Vikasa means, "becoming visible, shining forth, manifestation opening," as a flower unfolds

its petals, or the chakras unfold theirs as a result of kundalini awakening. See: spiritual unfoldment.

Adi Granth: (Sanskrit) "First book." The central Sikh scripture, compiled 1603-1604 from the writings of Sikh, Moslem and Hindu holy men, most importantly the beautiful hymns of adoration, called Japji, by Guru Nanak, the first Sikh Guru. In 1699, Gobind Singh, the tenth preceptor, decreed that the living succession would end with him, and this scripture would henceforth serve as Sikhism's guru. Its eloquent teachings are in harmony with Hinduism, but for the rejection of the Vedas and disavowal of image worship and caste. The Adi Granth is enshrined in all Sikh temples (gurudwaras). See: Sikhism.

Adinatha: (Sanskrit) "First Lord." A sage considered the first great preceptor (date unknown) of the Adinatha Sampradaya, a teaching tradition embodied in the Siddha Siddhanta sect of Saivism. See: Saivism, Natha.

Adinatha Sampradaya: (Sanskrit) See: Natha Sampradaya.

Adisaiva: (Sanskrit) A hereditary priest and teacher of the South Indian Saiva Siddhanta tradition; Saivite brahmins descended from the gotras of five rishis and who alone are entitled to conduct rites in Agamic Siva temples. Adisaiva and Sivacharya are synonyms for this hereditary priest lineage. See: Sivacharya.

adopt: To recognize as one's own, especially an idea, principle, or even a religion and henceforth live with it and by it. See: conversion to Hinduism.

adore: To love greatly; to worship as divine. See: puja.

adorn: To put on ornaments or decorations to make more beautiful, attractive or distinguished. See: kala-64.

adrishta: (Sanskrit) "Unseen potency; destiny." The unseen power of one's past karma influencing the present life. This power is known in the West as fate or destiny, generally not cognized as being of one's own making, but misunderstood as a mysterious, uncontrollable cosmic force. See: karma, fate.

adulate: To praise, revere, admire or flatter highly.

adultery: Sexual intercourse between a married man and a woman not his wife, or between a married woman and a man not her husband. Adultery is spoken of in Hindu shastras as a serious breach of dharma. See: sexuality.

advaita: (Sanskrit) "Non dual; not twofold." Nonduality or monism. The philosophical doctrine that Ultimate Reality consists of a one principal substance, or God. Opposite of dvaita, dualism. Advaita is the primary philosophical stance of the

Vedic Upanishads, and of Hinduism, interpreted differently by the many rishis, gurus, panditas and philosophers. See: dvaita-advaita, Vedanta.

Advaita Ishvaravada: (Sanskrit) "Nondual and Personal-God-as-Ruler doctrine." The Sanskrit equivalent of monistic theism. A general term that describes the philosophy of the Vedas and Saiva Agamas, which believes simultaneously in the ultimate oneness of all things and in the reality of the personal Deity. See: Advaita, Advaita Siddhanta, monistic theism.

Advaita Ishvaravadin: (Sanskrit) A follower of Advaita Ishvaravada.

Advaita Siddhanta: (Sanskrit) "Nondual perfect conclusions." Saivite philosophy codified in the Agamas which has at its core the nondual (advaitic) identity of God, soul and world. This monistic-theistic philosophy, unlike the Shankara, or Smarta view, holds that maya (the principle of manifestation) is not an obstacle to God Realization, but God's own power and presence guiding the soul's evolution to perfection. While Advaita Vedanta stresses Upanishadic philosophy, Advaita Siddhanta adds to this a strong emphasis on internal and external worship, yoga sadhanas and tapas. Advaita Siddhanta is a term used in South India to distinguish Tirumular's school from the pluralistic Siddhanta of Meykandar and Aghorasiva. This unified Vedic-Agamic doctrine is also known as Shuddha Saiva Siddhanta. It is the philosophy of this contemporary Hindu catechism. See: Advaita Ishvaravada, dvaita-advaita, monistic theism, Saiva Siddhanta.

Advaita Vedanta: (Sanskrit) "Nondual end (or essence) of the Vedas." Names the monistic schools, most prominently that of Shankara, that arose from the Upanishads and related texts. See: Vedanta.

adversity: A condition of misfortune, poverty or difficulty.

advocate: To write or speak in support of an idea, action or practice.

affirmation: Dridhavachana. "Firm statement." A positive declaration or assertion. A statement repeated regularly while concentrating on the meaning and mental images invoked, often used to attain a desired result.

affirmation of faith: A brief statement of one's faith and essential beliefs. See: anbe Sivamayam Satyame Parasivam.

aftermath: A result or consequence of a happening. The events or repercussions following an experience.

Agama: (Sanskrit) "That which has come down." An enormous collection of Sanskrit scriptures which, along with the Vedas, are revered as shruti (revealed scripture). Dating is uncertain. They were part of an oral tradition of unknown

antiquity which some experts consider as ancient as the earliest Vedas, 5000 to 6000 bce. The Agamas are the primary source and authority for ritual, yoga and temple construction. Each of the major denominations--Saivism, Vaishnavism and Shaktism--has its unique Agama texts. Smartas recognize the Agamas, but don't necessarily adhere to them and rely mainly on the smriti texts. See: Saiva Agamas, shruti.

Agastya: (Sanskrit) One of 18 celebrated Saiva siddhas (adepts), and accepted as the first grammarian of Tamil language. He is said to have migrated from North India to the South. His name appears in the Mahabharata, Ramayana and the Puranas and was known to ancient Indonesians. See: siddha.

Aghora: (Sanskrit) "Nonterrifying." An aspect of Siva which, like Rudra, is the personification of His power of dissolution or reabsorption. Ghora means "terrific, frightful, terrible, etc." See: Sadasiva.

Aghorasiva: (Sanskrit) A Saivite philosopher of South India who in the 12th century founded a Siddhanta school emphasizing dualistic passages of the Agamas and other early texts. The later Meykandar pluralistic philosophy is based partly on Aghorasiva's teachings. See: dvaita-advaita, dvaita Siddhanta, Saiva Siddhanta.

Aghori: (Sanskrit) "Nonterrifying." An order of Saiva ascetics thought to be derived from the Kapalika order (ca 14th century). Following the vamachara, "left-hand ritual of the tantras," they are widely censured for radical practices such as living in cemeteries and using human skulls as eating bowls.

agni: (Sanskrit) "Fire." 1) One of the five elements, panchabhuta. 2) God of the element fire, invoked through Vedic ritual known as yajna, agnikaraka, homa and havana. The God Agni is the divine messenger who receives prayers and oblations and conveys them to the heavenly spheres. See: yajna.

agnihotra: (Sanskrit) "Fire sacrifice." Household rite traditionally performed daily, in which an oblation of milk is sprinkled on the fire. See: yajna.

agnikaraka: (Sanskrit) "Fire ritual." The Agamic term for yajna. See: yajna.

Aham Brahmasmi: (Sanskrit) "I am God." Famous phrase often repeated in the Upanishads. In this ecstatic statement of enlightenment, "I" does not refer to the individuality or outer nature, but to the essence of the soul which is ever identical to God Siva (or Brahman, the Supreme Being) as Satchidananda and Parasiva. One of four Upanishadic "great sayings," mahavakya.

ahamkara: (Sanskrit) "I-maker." Personal ego. The mental faculty of individuation; sense of duality and separateness from others. Sense of I-ness, "me" and "mine." Ahamkara is characterized by the sense of I-ness (abhimana), sense of mine-ness,

identifying with the body (madiyah), planning for one's own happiness (mamasukha), brooding over sorrow (mamaduhkha), and possessiveness (mama idam). See: anava, ego, mind (individual).

ahimsa: (Sanskrit) "Noninjury," nonviolence or nonhurtfulness. Refraining from causing harm to others, physically, mentally or emotionally. Ahimsa is the first and most important of the yamas (restraints). It is the cardinal virtue upon which all others depend. See: yama-niyama.

aikya: (Sanskrit) "Union, oneness." See: Vira Saivism.

Aitareya Brahmana: (Sanskrit) Part of the Rig Veda dealing principally with worship and ceremonies of royal inauguration. See: Rig Veda, Vedas.

Aitareya Upanishad: (Sanskrit) Three chapters of the Aitareya Aranyaka of the Rig Veda expounding the esoterics of ritual, revealing the means of preparing oneself for the deepest spiritual attainments.

Ajita Agama: (Sanskrit) Among the 28 Saiva Siddhanta Agamas, this scripture especially elucidates temple construction, worship and rules for installation of various Siva icons (murti). See: murti, Saiva Agamas.

ajna chakra: (Sanskrit) "Command wheel." The third-eye center. See: chakra.

akasha: (sanskrit) "Space." The sky. Free, open space. Ether, the fifth and most subtle of the five elements--earth, air, fire, water and ether. Empirically, the rarified space or ethereal fluid plasma that pervades the universes, inner and outer. Esoterically, mind, the superconscious strata holding all that exists and all that potentially exists, wherein all happenings are recorded and can be read by clairvoyants. It is through psychic entry into this transcendental akasha that cosmic knowledge is gathered, and the entire circle of time--past, present and future--can be known. Space, akasha, in this concept is a positive substance, filled with unseen energies and intelligences, in contrast with the Western conception that space is the absence of everything and is therefore nothing in and of itself. The Advayataraka Upanishad (2.1.17) describes five levels of akasha which can be yogically experienced: guna rahita akasha (space devoid of qualities); parama akasha (supreme space), maha akasha (great space), tattva akasha (space of true existence) and surya akasha (space of the sun). See: mind (universal).

akshata: (Sanskrit) "Unbroken." Unmilled, uncooked rice, often mixed with turmeric, offered as a sacred substance during puja, or in blessings for individuals at weddings and other ceremonies. This, the very best food, is the finest offering a devotee can give to God or a wife can give to her husband. See: puja.

Allama Prabhu: (Sanskrit) A contemporary of Basavanna and central figure of Vira Saivism (ca 1150), the head of an order of 300 enlightened beings which included 60 women. Initially a temple drummer, he became an extraordinary siddha, mystic and poet. The Mantra Gopya are his collected writings. See: Basavanna, Vira Saivism.

allegory: A story in which the character, places and events have symbolic meaning, used to teach ideas and moral principles. See: Itihasa, Purana.

all-pervasive: Diffused throughout or existing in every part of the universe. See: Satchidananda.

aloof: Distant, reserved, withdrawn, drawn back; cool in attitude, not sympathetic with or interested in an idea, project or group of people.

altruistic: Unselfish. Showing more concern for others than oneself.

Alvar: (Tamil) "One who rules the Lord through bhakti." A group of renowned saints of the Vaishnava religion (7th-9th century), devotional mystics whose lives and teachings catalyzed to a resurgence of Vaishnavism in Tamil Nadu. Their devotional poems are embodied in the Nalayiram Divya Prabandham, containing about 4,000 hymns. Among the 12 most famous Alvars are Poykai, Pudam, Tirumalisai, Nammalvar, Kulashekhara, Andal, Tiruppan and Tirumangai. A term not to be confused with Nalvar, naming the four Samayacharya Saivite saints: Appar, Sundarar, Sambandar and Manikkavasagar, who were their contemporaries. See: Nalvar, Nayanar.

Amardaka Order: (Sanskrit) An order of Saiva sannyasins founded by Amardaka Tirthanatha in Andhra Pradesh (ca 775).

Amardaka Tirthanatha: (Sanskrit) See: Amardaka Order.

Ambika: (Sanskrit) "Mother." A benign form of the Goddess, one of the central Deities of the Shakta religion, along with Durga, Kali and Parvati. See: Shakti.

amends: To make amends, to make up for injury or loss that one has caused to another. This is done through sincere apology, expressing contrition, public penance, such as kavadi, and the abundant giving of gifts. See: papa, penance.

amid (amidst, amongst): In the middle of, among.

Amman: (Tamil) "Mother." Usually refers to Mariyamman, the "smallpox Goddess," protectress from plagues, a popular gramadevata ("village Deity" or tutelary Deity of a locale). There are many Mariyamman temples and shrines in Malaysia, Mauritius and rural areas of South India. In the Tamil tradition, amman is often appended to the names of various Goddesses, as in Kali Amman or Draupadi

Amman (deified heroine of the Mahabharata). One of the distinguishing features of gramadevata shrines is that they are not served by brahmin priests. See: Shakti, Shaktism.

amorphous: Of no definite shape or form. See: formless.

amritatman: (Sanskrit) "Immortal soul." See: atman, jiva, purusha, soul.

amrita: (Sanskrit) "Immortality." Literally, "without death (mrta)." The nectar of divine bliss which flows down from the sahasrara chakra when one enters very deep states of meditation. This word is apparently the source of the Greek amrotos, the ambrosia, food or drink, of the Gods, which has its Vedic equivalent in the legendary elixir called soma, a central element in Vedic rites in which it is venerated as a Divinity.

anahata chakra: (Sanskrit) "Wheel of unstruck [sound]." The heart center. See: chakra.

analogy: An explanation of a thing made by comparing it point by point with another thing. For example, in the analogy of the potter, the potter represents God and the clay represents the primal substance, or "matter."

analytical: Prone to looking closely at things, intellectually studying them to understand their nature, meaning and component parts.

ananda: (Sanskrit) "Bliss." The pure joy--ecstasy or enstasy--of God-consciousness or spiritual experience. In its highest sense, ananda is expressed in the famous Vedic description of God: sat-chit-ananda, "existence-consciousness-bliss"--the divine or superconscious mind of all souls. See: God Realization, Satchidananda.

anandamaya kosha: (Sanskrit) "Bliss body." The body of the soul, which ultimately merges with Siva. See: soul, kosha.

ananda tandava: (Sanskrit) "Violent dance of bliss." See: Nataraja, tandava.

anava mala: (Sanskrit) "Impurity of smallness; finitizing principle." The individualizing veil of duality that enshrouds the soul. It is the source of finitude and ignorance, the most basic of the three bonds (anava, karma, maya) which temporarily limit the soul. Anava mala has the same importance in Agamic philosophy that maya-avidya has in Vedantic philosophy. The presence of anava mala is what causes the misapprehension about the nature of God, soul and world, the notion of being separate and distinct from God and the universe. Anava obscures the natural wisdom, light, unity and humility of the soul and allows spiritual ignorance, darkness, egoity and pride to manifest. It is inherent in a maturing soul, like the shell of a seed. When anava is ripe, anugraha, "grace," comes, and anava falls

away. Anava is the root mala and the last bond to be dissolved. See: evolution of the soul, grace, mala, soul.

anavopaya: (Sanskrit) "Minute or individual means." See: upaya.

Anbe Sivamayam Satyame Parasivam: Tamil for "God Siva is Immanent Love and transcendent Reality." The affirmation of faith which capsulizes the entire creed of monistic Saiva Siddhanta. In Sanskrit it is Premaiva Sivamaya, Satyam eva Parasivah.

anchorite: "Hermit." A monk or aspirant who lives alone and apart from society, as contrasted with cenobite, a member of a religious order living in a monastery or convent. See: monk, nunk.

ancillary: Auxiliary. Aiding or supporting. Supplementary; secondary.

Andal: (Tamil) Famed Vaishnava saint of Tamil Nadu. One of the Alvars, she lived in the early 9th century and today is venerated as one of South India's greatest bhakta poetesses. See: Alvar, Vaishnavism.

Andhra Pradesh (Pradesha): (Sanskrit) Modern Indian state located on the southeast coast of India north of Tamil Nadu. The capital is Hyderabad. Language: Telegu. Dominant faith: Vaishnavism. Area: 106,000 square miles. Population 54 million. Famous for its opulent Tirupati Vaishnava temple.

anekavada: (Sanskrit) "Pluralism," or "not-one theology." See: pluralism.

anekavadin: (Sanskrit) A follower of anekavada.

anga: (Sanskrit) "Part; limb." Term for the individual soul in Vira Saivism. The anga is of finite intelligence, while Siva is of infinite intelligence. See: Vira Saivism.

aniconic: "Without likeness; without image." When referring to a Deity image, aniconic denotes a symbol which does not attempt an anthropomorphic (humanlike) or representational likeness. An example is the Sivalinga, "mark of God." See: murti, Sivalinga.

animate-inanimate: From the Latin animatus, "to make alive, fill with breath." These terms indicate the two poles of manifest existence, that which has movement and life (most expressly animals and other "living" beings) and that which is devoid of movement (such as minerals and, to a lesser degree, plants). From a deeper view, however, all existence is alive with movement and possessed of the potent, divine energy of the cosmos. See: tattva.

animism: The belief that everything (including inanimate objects) is alive with soul or spirit, a conviction pervasive among most indigenous (tribal/pagan/shamanistic) faiths, including Hinduism, Shintoism and spiritualism.

anjali mudra: (Sanskrit) "Reverence gesture." Also called pranamanjali. A gesture of respect and greeting, in which the two palms are held softly together and slightly cupped. Often accompanied by the verbal salutation "namaskara," meaning "reverent salutation." The anjali mudra has various forms, including held near the chest in greeting equals, at eye level in greeting one's guru, and above the head in salutation to God. One form is with the open hands placed side by side, as if by a beggar to receive food, or a worshiper beseeching God's grace in the temple. See: mudra, namaskara.

ankusha: (Sanskrit) Goad, symbol of Lord Ganesha's power to remove obstacles from the devotee's path, and to spur the dullards onward.

annamaya kosha: (Sanskrit) "Food sheath." The physical body. See: kosha.

annaprashana: (Sanskrit) "Feeding." The childhood sacrament of first solid food. See: samskaras of childhood.

annihilate: To destroy completely, to reduce to nothing.

antagonism: Opposition, hostility.

antahkarana: (Sanskrit) "Inner faculty." The mental faculty of the astral body, sukshma sharira, comprising intellect, instinct and ego--in Sanskrit, buddhi, manas and ahamkara--which are a three-fold expression of chitta, consciousness. Chitta is sometimes listed as a tattva, or part of a tattva, at the Prakriti level, in Saiva Siddhanta. In Vedanta, chitta, "mind stuff," is often understood as a part of antahkarana; while in the Saiva Siddhanta, Yoga and Sankhya Darshanas, it is generally viewed as the total mind, of which manas, buddhi and ahamkara are the inner faculties. Thus, while Vedanta describes antahkarana as four-fold, Sankhya and Yoga discuss it as three-fold. Siddha Siddhanta views antahkarana as five-fold, with the inclusion of chaitanya as "higher consciousness." See: consciousness, mind (individual), tattva.

Antarloka: (Sanskrit) "Inner or in-between world." The astral plane. See: loka.

anthology: A choice collection of prose or poetry excerpts.

antyavachanam: (Sanskrit) "Final word." Colophon. Epilogue.

antyeshti: (Sanskrit) "Last rites." Funeral. See: death, samskara.

anu: (Sanskrit) A common prefix conveying the meanings: "after, near to, under, secondary or subordinate to."

anubhava: (Sanskrit) "Perception, apprehension; experience." Personal experience; understanding; impressions on the mind not derived from memory.

anugraha shakti: (Sanskrit) "Graceful or favoring power." Revealing grace. God Siva's power of illumination, through which the soul is freed from the bonds of anava, karma and maya and ultimately attains liberation, moksha. Specifically, anugraha descends on the soul as shaktipata, the diksha (initiation) from a satguru. Anugraha is a key concept in Saiva Siddhanta. It comes when anava mala, the shell of finitude which surrounds the soul, reaches a state of ripeness, malaparipaka. See: anava, grace, Nataraja, shaktipata.

anukramanika: (Sanskrit) "Succession, arrangement." An index.

anupaya: (Sanskrit) "Without means." A term used in Kashmir Saivism to mean spontaneous Self Realization without effort. See: upaya.

anxiety: State of uneasiness, worry or apprehension. See: manas.

Apasmarapurusha: (Sanskrit) "Forgetful person." The soul under Siva's foot of obscuring grace, depicted in numerous icons. He represents ignorance and heedlessness. (Sometimes simply Apasmara.) See: Nataraja.

apatya: (Sanskrit) "Offspring; child; descendant."

apex: Highest point, peak.

apex of creation: The highest or initial movement in the mind that will eventually manifest a creation. The quantum level of manifestation. See: microcosm-macrocosm, quantum, tattva.

Appar: (Tamil) "Father." Endearing name for Tirunavukarasu (ca 700), one of four Tamil saints, Samayacharyas, who reconverted errant Saivites who had embraced Jainism. Calling himself the servant of God's servants, he composed magnificent hymns in praise of Siva that are reverently sung to this day. See: Nalvar, Nayanar, Saiva Siddhanta.

apparent: Appearing, but not necessarily real or true. Seeming to be.

Appaya Dikshita: (Sanskrit) Philosophical genius of South India (1554-1626) who worked to reconcile Vaishnavism and Saivism, advancing the Siva Advaita school of Saivism by his writings, and bolstering other schools by his brilliant summations of their philosophies. He is best known for his commentaries on the teachings of

Srikantha. Appaya Dikshita also created a manual of Saiva temple ritual still in use today. See: Siva Advaita.

apprehend: To mentally seize and hold, to see or understand; to physically detain.

Aranyaka: (Sanskrit) "Forest treatise." Third section of each of the four Vedas. Texts containing esoteric, mystical knowledge, largely on the inner meanings and functions of the Vedic yajna, or fire ceremonies. See: Vedas.

arati: (Sanskrit) "Light." The circling or waving of a lamp--usually fed with ghee, camphor or oil--before a holy person or the temple Deity at the high point of puja. The flame is then presented to the devotees, each passing his or her hands through it and bringing them to the eyes three times, thereby receiving the blessings. Arati can also be performed as the briefest form of puja. See: archana, puja.

Arbhuta Tiru Antadi: (Tamil) poem of 100 verses in praise of Lord Siva composed in Tamil by the woman Saint Karaikkal Ammaiyar (ca 5th century). See: Nayanar.

archana: (Sanskrit) A special, personal, abbreviated puja done by temple priests in which the name, birthstar and family lineage of a devotee are recited to invoke individual guidance and blessings. Archana also refers to chanting the names of the Deity, which is a central part of every puja. See: puja.

Ardhanari Nateshvara Stotram: (Sanskrit) A short hymn alternately praising Siva and Shakti as merged in the androgynous image of Ardhanarishvara. See: Ardhanarishvara.

Ardhanarishvara: (Sanskrit) "Half-female Lord." Lord Siva in androgynous form, male on the right side and female on the left, indicating that: 1) Siva (like all Mahadevas) is genderless; 2) Siva is All, inseparable from His energy, Shakti; 3) in Siva the ida (feminine) and the pingala (masculine) nadis (psychic nerve currents) are balanced so that sushumna is ever active. The meditator who balances these through sadhana and yoga becomes like Siva. In the unity of Ardhanarishvara all opposites are reconciled; duality vanishes back into the one source. This icon especially represents Siva's second perfection: Pure Consciousness (Satchidananda or Parashakti). See: kundalini, nadi, Shakti, Siva.

Ardra Darshana: (Sanskrit) A ten-day festival ending on Ardra nakshatra, near the full moon of December-January honoring Siva Nataraja. In Tamil Nadu, each morning at 4am, the mystical songs of Saint Manikkavasagar, Tiruvembavai, are sung or recited. Unmarried girls go to the temple in small groups to pray for rains, for the welfare of the land and for fine, spiritual husbands. At the famed temple of Chidambaram in Tamil Nadu, Lord Nataraja, the presiding Deity, is taken out for a grand procession in a chariot pulled through the streets by thousands of devotees. See: darshana, Nataraja.

arduous: Strenuous, laborious. Difficult to climb, do or accomplish.

arena: Any place where an event, usually involving struggle or conflict, takes place. The earth is the arena of the soul's evolution. See: evolution of the soul.

Aristotle: Greek philosopher (384-322 bce) who left a profound legacy of writings on metaphysics, ethics, logic and law. A disciple of Plato.

arjava: (Sanskrit) "Steadfastness." See: yama-niyama.

Arjuna: (Sanskrit) A hero of the Mahabharata and central figure of the Bhagavad Gita. See: Bhagavad Gita.

artha: (Sanskrit) "Goal" or "purpose;" wealth, substance, property, money. Also has the meaning of utility; desire. See: dharma, purushartha.

Arthaveda: (Sanskrit) "Science of statecraft." A class of ancient texts, also called Nitishastras, on politics, statecraft and much more, forming the Upaveda of the Rig Veda. The most important text of this group is Kautilya's Arthashastra (ca 300 bce) which gives detailed instructions on all areas of government. It embodies the kshatriya perspective of rulership and society. See: Upaveda.

Arunagirinathar: (Tamil) South Indian Saivite poet saint (ca 1500). See: Kandar Anubhuti.

Aruneya Upanishad: (Sanskrit) A short Upanishad dealing with sannyasa. See: sannyasa.

Aryaman: (Sanskrit) "Close friend; matchmaker; Sun God." A Vedic Deity who personifies hospitality, the household and grihastha life. He presides over matrimonial alliances, and protects tradition, custom and religion. He is also invoked during shraddha (funeral-memorial) ceremonies.

asana: (Sanskrit) "Seat; posture." In hatha yoga, asana refers to any of numerous poses prescribed to balance and tune up the subtle energies of mind and body for meditation and to promote health and longevity. Examples are the shoulder-stand (sarvangasana,"whole body pose") and the lotus pose (padmasana). Each asana possesses unique benefits, affecting the varied inner bodies and releasing energies in different parts of the nervous system. While the physical science of hatha yoga can dramatically influence health and general well-being, it is primarily a preparation for the deeper yogas and meditations. Sivaya Subramuniaswami has provided a system of 27 asanas to tune the nervous system for meditation and contemplation and to mitigate the burdensome karmas, known by the modern term "stress," built up through the interaction with other people. His 27 asanas are performed in a

meditative sequence, not unlike a serene dance, accompanied by certain visualizations and pranayamas. See: hatha yoga, raja yoga, yoga.

ascent: Rising or climbing higher. A path that leads upward.

ascetic: A person who leads a life of contemplation and rigorous self-denial, shunning comforts and pleasures for religious purposes. See: monk, nunk.

asceticism: The austerities of an ascetic. See: sadhana, tapas.

ash: See: vibhuti.

ashtanga pranama: (Sanskrit) "Eight-limbed salutation." See: pranama.

ashtavaranam: (Sanskrit) "Eight shields." Vira Saivism's eight aids to faith: guru, Linga, jangama (monk), vibhuti, rudraksha, paduka, prasada (bathing water from Sivalinga or guru's feet), and Panchakshara Mantra (Namah Sivaya). See: Vira Saivism.

ashrama: (Sanskrit) "Place of striving." From shram, "to exert energy." Hermitage; order of the life. Holy sanctuary; the residence and teaching center of a sadhu, saint, swami, ascetic or guru; often includes lodging for students. Also names life's four stages. See: ashrama dharma, sadhana.

ashrama dharma: (Sanskrit) "Laws life's orders." Meritorious way of life particular to each of the four stages (ashramas) of life, following which one lives in harmony with nature and life, allowing the body, emotions and mind to develop and undergo their natural cycles in a most positive way. The four stages are as follows. --**brahmacharya:** (Sanskrit) Studentship, from age 12 to 24. --**grihastha:** (Sanskrit) Householder, from 24 to 48. --**vanaprastha:** (Sanskrit) Elder advisor, from 48 to 72. --**sannyasa:** (Sanskrit) Religious solitaire, from 72 onward. The first two ashramas make up the pravritti marga, (Sanskrit) the way of going toward the world through the force of desire and ambition. The last two are the nivritti marga, (Sanskrit) moving away from the world through introspection and renunciation. See: dharma, grihastha dharma, sannyasa dharma.

Assam: (Sanskrit) Indian state in the northeast corner of the country, south of Bhutan, almost separated from the rest of India by Bangladesh. Area 30,000 square miles, population 21 million.

assuage: To lessen pain or distress; to calm passions or desires.

asteya: (Sanskrit) "Nonstealing." See: yama-niyama.

astikya: (Sanskrit) "Faith." See: faith, shraddha, yama-niyama.

astral body: The subtle, nonphysical body (sukshma sharira) in which the soul functions in the astral plane, the inner world also called Antarloka. The astral body includes the pranic sheath (pranamaya kosha), the instinctive-intellectual sheath (manomaya kosha) and the cognitive sheath (vijnanamaya kosha)--with the pranic sheath dropping off at the death of the physical body. See: kosha, soul.

astral plane: The subtle world, or Antarloka, spanning the spectrum of consciousness from the vishuddha chakra in the throat to the patala chakra in the soles of the feet. The astral plane includes: 1) the higher astral plane, **Maharloka**, "plane of balance;" 2) mid-astral plane, **Svarloka**, "celestial plane;" 3) lower astral plane, **Bhuvarkloka**, "plane of atmosphere," a counterpart or subtle duplicate of the physical plane (consisting of the Pitriloka and Pretaloka); and 4) the sub-astral plane, **Naraka**, consisting of seven hellish realms corresponding to the seven chakras below the base of the spine. In the astral plane, the soul is enshrouded in the astral body, called sukshma sharira. See also: astral body, loka, Naraka, three worlds.

astrology: Science of celestial influences. See: jyotisha, Vedanga.

asura: (Sanskrit) "Evil spirit; demon." (Opposite of sura: "deva; God.") A being of the lower astral plane, Naraka. Asuras can and do interact with the physical plane, causing major and minor problems in people's lives. Asuras do evolve and do not remain permanently in this state. See: Naraka.

Ashvaghosha: (Sanskrit) Buddhist scholar, pantheist philosopher (ca 80 bce-150 ce), and one of the great poets of Indian history. A principal architect of the Mahayana school. See: pantheism.

Ashvin: (Sanskrit) Vedic heroes--twins, young, handsome, brilliant and agile--who embody the dawn, the transition from darkness to light, and from disease to health. They are physicians of the Gods, and honey is one of their symbols. They also represent duality acting in unison. See: Vedas, Rig Veda.

atala: (Sanskrit) "Bottomless region." The first chakra below the muladhara, centered in the hips. Region of fear and lust. Corresponds to the first astral netherworld beneath the earth's surface, called Put ("childless") or Atala, the first of seven hellish regions of consciousness. See: chakra, loka, Naraka.

atattva: (Sanskrit) "Noncategory; beyond existence." Atattva is the negation of the term tattva, and is used to describe the indescribable Reality--the Absolute, Parasiva, the Self God--which transcends all 36 categories (tattvas) of manifestation. It is beyond time, form and space. And yet, in a mystery known only to the knower--the enlightened mystic--Parashakti-nada, the first tattva, ever comes out of Parasiva. If it were not for Parasiva, nothing could be. Parasiva does not exist to the outer dimensions of cosmic consciousness, but without it, the mind itself would not exist. See: tattva.

atha: (Sanskrit) "Now; then; certainly." An inceptive particle and mark of auspiciousness used to begin sacred works. For example, the first sutra of the Yoga Sutras reads, "Now then (atha), an exposition on yoga."

Atharvashikha Upanishad: (Sanskrit) A minor Upanishad dealing with the interpretation of Aum. See: Upanishad, Vedas.

Atharva Veda: (Sanskrit) From "Atharva," the name of the rishi said to have compiled this fourth Veda. The Atharva consists of 20 books and 720 hymns. Considered the last Veda recorded, it consists of mostly original hymns (rather than replications from the Rig Veda). It is known as the Veda of prayer, in recognition of its abundant magical charms and spells. It also contains many Agama-like cosmological passages that bridge the earlier Vedic hymns and formulas with the metaphysics of the Upanishads. See: Vedas.

atheism: The rejection of all religion or religious belief, or simply the belief that God or Gods do not exist. See: charvaka, materialism, nastika.

atman: (Sanskrit) "The soul; the breath; the principle of life and sensation." The soul in its entirety--as the soul body (anandamaya kosha) and its essence (Parashakti and Parasiva). One of Hinduism's most fundamental tenets is that we are the atman, not the physical body, emotions, external mind or personality. In Hindu scriptures, atman sometimes refers to the ego-personality, and its meaning must be determined according to context. The Atma Upanishad (1-3) describes atman, or purusha, as threefold: bahyatman, the outer or physical person; antaratman, the inner person, excluding the physical form, who perceives, thinks and cognizes; and Paramatman, the transcendent Self God within. See: Paramatman, kosha, soul.

atmartha puja: (Sanskrit) "Personal worship rite." Home puja. See: puja.

atmasvarupa: (Sanskrit) "Nature of the soul." See: atman, soul.

atmosphere: The pervading or surrounding spirit or influence. General mood or environment. See: sannidhya.

atone: To make amends or reconcile. See: absolution, papa, penance, sin.

attainment: Acquisition, achievement or realization through effort. Spiritual accomplishment. Saiva Siddhanta notes four primary levels of attainment: salokya (sharing God's world, the goal of charya), samipya (nearness to God, the goal of kriya), sarupya (likeness to God, the goal of yoga) and sayujya (union with God, the state of jnana). See: God Realization, pada, Self Realization, siddha yoga, siddhi.

attitude: Disposition. State of mind. Manner of carrying oneself. Manner of acting, thinking or feeling which reveals one's disposition, opinions and beliefs. See: conscience.

augural: Having to do with divination, prediction or interpreting omens.

Augustine: Catholic bishop saint (354-430) and highly influential theologian.

Aum: (Sanskrit) or (Sanskrit) Often spelled Om. The mystic syllable of Hinduism, placed at the beginning of most sacred writings. As a mantra, it is pronounced aw (as in law), oo (as in zoo), mm. Aum represents the Divine, and is associated with Lord Ganesha, for its initial sound "aa," vibrates within the muladhara, the chakra at the base of the spine upon which this God sits. The second sound of this mantra, "oo," vibrates within the throat and chest chakras, the realm of Lord Murugan, or Kumara, known by the Hawaiian people as the God Ku. The third sound, "mm," vibrates within the cranial chakras, ajna and sahasrara, where the Supreme God reigns. The dot above, called anusvara, represents the Soundless Sound, Paranada. Aum is explained in the Upanishads as standing for the whole world and its parts, including past, present and future. It is from this primal vibration that all manifestation issues forth. Aum is the primary, or mula mantra, and often precedes other mantras. It may be safely used for chanting and japa by anyone of any religion. Its three letters represent the three worlds and the powers of creation, preservation and destruction. In common usage in several Indian languages, aum means "yes, verily" or "hail." See: nada, Pranava, sound.

aura: The luminous colorful field of subtle energy radiating within and around the human body, extending out from three to seven feet. The colors of the aura change constantly according to the ebb and flow of one's state of consciousness, thoughts, moods and emotions. Higher, benevolent feelings create bright pastels; base, negative feelings are darker in color. Thus, auras can be seen and "read" by clairvoyants. The general nature of auras varies according to individual unfoldment. Great mystics have very bright auras, while instinctive persons are shrouded in dull shades. The aura consists of two aspects, the outer aura and the inner aura. The outer aura extends beyond the physical body and changes continuously, reflecting the individual's moment-to-moment panorama of thought and emotion. The inner aura is much more constant, as it reflects deep-seated subconscious patterns, desires, repressions and tendencies held in the sub-subconscious mind. Those colors which are regularly and habitually reflected in the outer aura are eventually recorded more permanently in the inner aura. The colors of the inner aura permeate out through the outer aura and either shade with sadness or brighten with happiness the normal experiences of daily life. The inner aura hovers deep within the astral body in the chest and torso and looks much like certain "modern-art" paintings, with heavy strokes of solid colors here and there. In Sanskrit, the aura is called prabhamandala, "luminous circle," or diptachakra, "wheel of light." See: mind (five states), papa, punya.

Aurobindo Ghosh: (Sanskrit) A prolific Bengali writer and poet, pantheistic philosopher and yoga mystic, widely known as Sri Aurobindo (1872-1950). He perceived the modern global crisis as marking a period of transition from a dark age to a more enlightened one, when Hinduism will play a preponderant role. He founded the Auroville community in Pondichery, based on purna (integral) yoga and contributed much to this century's Hindu revival.

auspicious: Mangala. Favorable, of good omen, foreboding well. One of the central concepts in Hindu life. Astrology defines a method for determining times that are favorable for various human endeavors. Much of daily living and religious practice revolves around an awareness of auspiciousness. Endowed with great power and importance, it is associated with times, places and persons. See: jyotisha, muhurta, swastika, Tai Pongal.

austerity: Self-denial and discipline, physical or mental, performed for various reasons including acquiring powers, attaining grace, conquering the instinctive nature and burning the seeds of past karmas. Ranging from simple deprivations, such as foregoing a meal, to severe disciplines, called tapas, such as always standing, never sitting or lying down, even for sleep. See: penance, tapas.

authenticity: Quality of being authentic, or genuine, trustworthy. Reliable.

authority: Influence, power or right to give commands, enforce obedience, take action or make final decisions.

Auvaiyar: (Tamil) A woman saint of Tamil Nadu (ca 800 ce), devotee of Lord Ganesha and Karttikeya and one of the greatest literary figures in ancient India. As a young girl, she prayed to have her beauty removed so she would not be forced into marriage and could devote her full life to God. She was a great bhakta who wrote exquisite ethical works, some in aphoristic style and some in four-line verse. Among the most famous are Atti Chudi, Konrai Ventan, Ulaka Niti, Muturai, and Nalvali. Her Tamil primer is studied by children to this day. A second Saint Auvaiyar may have lived in the ninth century [See: Timeline, p. 625.]

Avantivarman: (Sanskrit) King of Kashmir (855-883) during whose reign lived Kallata, one of the great exponents of Kashmir Saivism.

avatara: (Sanskrit) "Descent." A God born in a human (or animal) body. A central concept of Shaktism, Smartism and Vaishnavism. See: incarnation, Ishta Devata, Vaishnavism.

avidya: (Sanskrit) Spiritual "ignorance." Wrongful understanding of the nature of reality. Mistaking the impermanent for the everlasting.

awareness: Sakshin, or chit. Individual consciousness, perception, knowing; the witness of perception, the "inner eye of the soul." The soul's ability to sense, see or know and to be conscious of this knowing. When awareness is indrawn (pratyak chetana), various states of samadhi may occur. Awareness is known in the Agamas as chitshakti, the "power of awareness," the inner self and eternal witness. See: consciousness, sakshin.

ayurveda: (Sanskrit) "Science of life." A holistic system of medicine and health native to ancient India. This sacred Vedic science is an Upaveda of the Atharva Veda. Three early giants in this field who left voluminous texts are Charaka, Sushruta and Vagbhata. Ayurveda covers many areas, including: 1) chikitsa, general medicine, 2) shalya, surgery, 3) dehavritti, physiology, 4) nidana, diagnosis, 5) dravyavidya, medicine and pharmacology, 6) agada tantra, antidote method, 7) stritantra, gynecology, 8) pashu vidya, veterinary science, 9) kaumara bhritya, pediatrics, 10) urdhvanga, diseases of the organs of the head, 11) bhuta vidya, demonology, 12) rasayana, tonics, rejuvenating, 13) vajikarana, sexual rejuvenation. Among the first known surgeons was Sushruta (ca 600 bce), whose Sushruta Samhita is studied to this day. (Hippocrates, Greek father of medicine, lived two centuries later.) The aims of ayurveda are ayus, "long life," and arogya, "diseaselessness," which facilitate progress toward ultimate spiritual goals. Health is achieved by balancing energies (especially the doshas, bodily humors) at all levels of being, subtle and gross, through innumerable methods, selected according to the individual's constitution, lifestyle and nature. Similar holistic medical systems are prevalent among many communities, including the Chinese, American Indians, Africans and South Americans. See: doshas.

ayurveda vaidya: (Sanskrit) A practitioner, or physician, of ayurveda.

Ayyappan: (Tamil) The popular God of a recently formed sect that focuses on pilgrimage to the top of Sabarimalai, a sacred hill in Kerala, where He is said to appear at night as a divine light. Ayyappan is revered as a son of Vishnu and Siva (Hari-Hara putra). His vahana is the tiger.

axiom: A rule or maxim that is universally accepted as true.

axis: A real or imaginary straight line around which a planet rotates. More generally, axis means a central line of development.

B

backbiting: Speaking maliciously or slanderously about a person who is absent.

Badarayana: (Sanskrit) Author of the Brahma Sutras. See: Brahma Sutra.

balipitha: (Sanskrit) "Offering place." An inverted lotus-shaped stone atop a pedestal situated near the temple flagpole, dhvajastambha. Here devotees are to leave all negative thoughts as they enter the temple.

bard: A singer or reciter of epic poems.

Basavanna: (Sanskrit) A 12th-century philosopher, poet and prime minister who reformed and revived Vira Saivism in Karnataka. See: Vira Saivism.

Batara: A name of Siva used in Indonesia. See: Siva.

Baudhayana Dharma Shastra: (Sanskrit) A book of laws associated with the Krishna Yajur Veda and governing studentship, marriage, household rituals, civil law, etc. It is followed by brahmins of Southwest India. See: Dharma Shastra, Kalpa Vedanga.

bce: Abbreviation for "before common era," referring to dating prior to the year zero in the Western, or Gregorian calendar, system. Thus, 300 bce was 300 years before the turn of the millennium. Cf: ce.

Being: When capitalized being refers to God's essential divine nature--Pure Consciousness, Absolute Reality and Primal Soul (God's nature as a divine Person). Lower case being refers to the essential nature of a person, that within which never changes; existence. See: Siva.

benediction: A blessing, especially a spoken one. See: blessing.

benevolence: Inclination to do good; charitable, kindly. See: yama-niyama.

benign: Good, kindly, doing no harm. See: ahimsa.

beseech: To ask of someone earnestly. To solicit with fervor.

bestow: To offer as a gift. See: dana.

betoken: To indicate, show; offer as a sign of the future. Symbolize.

betrothal: Mutual pledge to marry; engagement. In Sanskrit, vagdana or nishchitartha. See: samskaras of adulthood.

bewilder: To baffle or confuse through something complicated or involved.

bhaga: n (Sanskrit) "Good fortune; happiness." A God of the Rig Veda; Lord of wealth, prowess and happiness. See: purushartha, Rig Veda, wealth.

Bhagavad Gita: n (Sanskrit) "Song of the Lord." One of the most popular of Hindu writings, a conversation between Lord Krishna and Arjuna on the brink of the great battle at Kurukshetra. In this central episode of the epic Mahabharata (part of the sixth book), Krishna illumines the warrior-prince Arjuna on yoga, asceticism, dharma and the manifold spiritual path. See: Itihasa, Mahabharata.

Bhagavata: n (Sanskrit) "Relating to God or a God holy; sacred, divine." Pertaining to Vishnu or Krishna. From bhaga, "Gracious lord; patron; good fortune." The name of a sect of Vaishnavism which arose in the Western part of India after 600 bce. A highly devotional monotheistic faith worshipping God as Krishna, Vasudeva or Vasudeva-Krishna. It is believed by scholars to have been one of five religions (along with the Ekantika, Narayaniya, Vaikhanasa and Satvata) that blended to form what was called the Pancharatra religion in the vicinity of Mathura around 300 bce. Today, the term Bhagavata is often used to refer to the Vaishnavite religion as a whole. See: Pancharatra, Vaishnavism.

Bhagavata Purana: n (Sanskrit) Also known as Srimad Bhagavatam, a work of 18,000 stanzas. A major Purana and primary Vaishnava scripture, from oral tradition, written down ca 800. It provides the stories of all incarnations of Vishnu, filled with the bhakti, inner current of devotion. See: Purana.

Bhairava: n (Sanskrit) "Terrifying." Lord Siva as the fiery protector. He carries and is represented by a trishula (trident), a symbol often enshrined as guardian at the entrance to Siva temples. See: Siva, trishula.

bhajana: n (Sanskrit) Spiritual song. Individual or group singing of devotional songs, hymns and chants. See: congregational worship, kirtana.

bhakta: n (Sanskrit) "Devotee." A worshiper. One who is surrendered to the Divine.

bhakti: n (Sanskrit) "Devotion." Surrender to God, Gods or guru. Bhakti extends from the simplest expression of devotion to the ego-decimating principle of prapatti, which is total surrender. Bhakti is the foundation of all sects of Hinduism, as well as yoga schools throughout the world. See: bhakti yoga, darshana, prapatti, prasada, sacrifice, surrender, yajna.

bhakti yoga: n (Sanskrit) "Union through devotion." Bhakti yoga is the practice of devotional disciplines, worship, prayer, chanting and singing with the aim of awakening love in the heart and opening oneself to God's grace. Bhakti may be directed toward God, Gods or one's spiritual preceptor. Bhakti yoga seeks

communion and ever closer rapport with the Divine, developing qualities that make communion possible, such as love, selflessness and purity. Saint Sambandar described bhakti as religion's essence and the surest means to divine union and liberation. He advised heartfelt worship, unstinting devotion and complete surrender to God in humble, committed service. From the beginning practice of bhakti to advanced devotion, called prapatti, self-effacement is an intricate part of Hindu, even all Indian, culture. Bhakti yoga is embodied in Patanjali's Yoga Darshana in the second limb, niyamas (observances), as devotion (Ishvarapranidhana). Bhakti yoga is practiced in many Hindu schools, and highly developed in Vaishnavism as a spiritual path in itself, leading to perfection and liberation. In Saiva Siddhanta, its cultivation is the primary focus during the kriya pada (stage of worship). See: bhakti yoga, prapatti, sacrifice, surrender, yajna.

Bharat: n (Sanskrit) "He who supports, maintains or bears a burden." The ancient and original name of Indian lands and the constitutional name of independent India. (Bharat In Hindi.) Also, Bharatavarsha "land of Bharata," a legendary monarch and sage.

bhashya: n (Sanskrit) "Speech, discussion." Commentary on a text. Hindu philosophies are largely founded upon the interpretations, or bhashyas, of primary scripture. Other types of commentaries include: vritti, a brief commentary on aphorisms; tippani, like a vritti but less formal, explains difficult words or phrases; varttika, a critical study and elaboration of a bhashya; and tika or vyakhyana, an explanation of a bhashya or shastra in simpler language.

Bhaskara: n (Sanskrit) Philosopher (ca 950). His Bhaskarabhashya, a commentary on the Brahma Sutras, was the first elaborate criticism of Shankara's Advaitic doctrine of avidya-maya. See: Shankara, Vedanta, Vishishtadvaita.

Bhavalinga: n (Sanskrit) "Mark of existence." Siva beyond space and time. See: atattva, Parasiva, Sivalinga, Vira Saivism.

bhedabheda: n (Sanskrit) "Difference-nondifference." A term in Vedanta which means that soul and world are identical with and yet different from God, in the same way that the waves of an ocean can be seen as being nondifferent from the ocean, yet they are not the ocean, only a part of it. See: Vedanta.

Bhogarishi: nu (Sanskrit) One of the 18 siddhas of Saiva tradition, an alchemist and tantrika yogi, associated with the Palani Hills Murugan temple in South India, who created the Dandayuthapaniswami murti from nine poisonous metals. He is thought by some to still reside there in a cave. Chinese historical records suggest that he came from China. See: siddha, siddhi, tantric.

Bhojadeva Paramara: nu (Sanskrit) ite king, poet, artist and theologian of Gujarat (1018-1060). Author of Tattvaparakasha. Renowned for establishing a

systematic, monistic Saiva Siddhanta, and creating India's then largest artificial lake, 250 miles in length, called Bhojpur. See: Tatparyadipika.

bhriyachara: n (Sanskrit) "Servant's way." One of the five Vira Saiva codes of conduct. See: Panchachara, Vira Saivism.

Bhuloka: n (Sanskrit) "Earth world." The physical plane. See: loka.

bhumika: n (Sanskrit) "Earth; ground; soil." Preface; introduction to a book. From bhu, "to become, exist; arise, come into being."

Bhuvarkala: n (Sanskrit) "Plane of atmosphere." The second of the seven upper worlds, realm of svadhishtana chakra, consisting of the two astral regions closest to the physical plane: Pitriloka, "world of ancestors," and Pretaloka, "world of the departed." See: loka.

Bijjala: (Sanskrit) A king in Karnataka associated with the life of Basavanna.

bilva: (Sanskrit) Wood-apple (or bael) tree, Aegle marmelos, sacred to Lord Siva. Its leaves, picked in threes, are offered in the worship of the Sivalinga. The delicious fruit when unripe is used medicinally.

bindu: (Sanskrit) "A drop, small particle, dot." 1) The seed or source of creation. In the 36 tattvas, the nucleus or first particle of transcendent light, technically called Parabindu, corresponding to the Shakti tattva. Scientists say the whole universe just before the big bang could fit on the head of a pin--a tremendous point of energy--that is Parabindu. 2) Small dot worn on the forehead between the eyebrows, or in the middle of the forehead, made of red powder (kunkuma), sandalpaste, clay, cosmetics or other substance. It is a sign that one is a Hindu. Mystically, it represents the "third eye," or the "mind's eye," which sees things that the physical eyes cannot see. The forehead dot is a reminder to use and cultivate one's spiritual vision, to perceive and understand life's inner workings, as well as to look into the past to see the future. The bindu is also a beauty mark worn by Hindu women, the color red generally a sign of marriage, black often worn before marriage to ward off the evil eye, kudrishti or papadrishti. The bindu is known as pottu in Tamil. Bindu is also a term for semen. See: tattva, tilaka.

birth chart: Janmapatrika. An astrological map of the sky drawn for a person's moment and place of birth. Also known as rashi chakra or zodiac wheel, it is the basis for interpreting the traits of individuals and the experiences, prarabdha karmas, they will go through in life. See: jyotisha, karma.

birthstar: See: nakshatra.

bi-sexual: Of or characterized by sexual attraction for members of both genders. See: heterosexual, homosexual, sexuality.

blessing: Good wishes; benediction. Seeking and giving blessings is extremely central in Hindu life, nurtured in the precepts of karunya (grace), shakti (energy), darshana (encountering/seeing the divine), prasada (blessed offerings), puja (invocation), tirthayatra (pilgrimage), diksha (initiation), shaktipata (descent of grace), samskaras (rites of passage), sannidhya (holy presence) and sadhana (inner-attunement disciplines).

bodhaka: (Sanskrit) "Teacher." One who awakens or catalyzes knowing; a religious instructor or catalyst.

bodhi tantra: (Sanskrit) "Wise methods; ways of wisdom." See: sadhana, tantra.

bodies: See: kosha, sharira, soul.

bodily humor: Commonly, the fluids of the body, an English equivalent of the ayurvedic term dosha, which names three fundamental interbalancing principles or constituents of the human constitution. See: ayurveda, dosha.

bond (bondage): See: evolution of the soul, mala, pasha.

bone-gathering: Asthisanchaya. Part of Hindu funeral rites. About twelve hours after cremation, family men return to the cremation site to collect the remains. Water is first sprinkled on the ashes to separate the black ash of the wood from the fine, white ash of the body. The white ash and bones (up to four inches long, called flowers) are collected in a tray or brass pot. Some Hindus send the ashes and bones for deposition in the Ganges. Or they may be put into any ocean or river. Arrangements can be made with crematoriums in the East or West for the family to personally gather the ash and flowers. See: cremation, samskaras of adulthood.

boon: Varadana. A welcome blessing, a gracious benefit received. An unexpected benefit or bonus. See: blessing, grace.

bountiful: Giving abundantly and without restraint; plentiful.

Brahma: (Sanskrit) The name of God in His aspect of Creator. Saivites consider Brahma, Vishnu and Rudra to be three of five aspects of Siva. Smartas group Brahma, Vishnu and Siva as a holy trinity in which Siva is the destroyer. Brahma the Creator is not to be confused with 1) Brahman, the Transcendent Supreme of the Upanishads; 2) Brahmana, Vedic texts; 3) brahmana, the Hindu priest caste (also spelled brahmin). See: Brahman, Parameshvara.

brahmachari: (Sanskrit) "He who is moving in God." An unmarried male spiritual aspirant who practices continence, observes religious disciplines, including sadhana, devotion and service and who may be under simple vows. Also names one in the student stage, age 12-24, or until marriage. See: ashrama dharma, monk.

brahmacharini: (Sanskrit) Feminine counterpart of brahmachari. See: nunk.

brahmacharya: (Sanskrit) "Path to God," or "moving in God." Sexual purity. See: yama-niyama.

brahmacharya ashrama: (Sanskrit) See: ashrama dharma.

brahma muhurta: (Sanskrit) "Time of God." A very favorable time for sadhana. It is traditional to arise before this period, bathe and begin one's morning worship. Brahma muhurta is defined as roughly 1.5 hours, the last muhurta of the night in the 8-muhurta system. It is understood as comprising the final three muhurtas of the night in 15 or 16-muhurta systems, equalling 144 minutes or 135 minutes respectively. See: muhurta.

Brahman: (Sanskrit) "Supreme Being; expansive spirit." From the root brih, "to grow, increase, expand." Name of God or Supreme Deity in the Vedas, where He is described as 1) the Transcendent Absolute, 2) the all-pervading energy and 3) the Supreme Lord or Primal Soul. These three correspond to Siva in His three perfections. Thus, Saivites know Brahman and Siva to be one and the same God. --**Nirguna Brahman:** God "without qualities (guna)," i.e., formless, Absolute Reality, Parabrahman, or Parasiva--totally transcending guna (quality), manifest existence and even Parashakti, all of which exhibit perceivable qualities. --**Saguna Brahman:** God "with qualities;" Siva in His perfections of Parashakti and Parameshvara--God as superconscious, omnipresent, all-knowing, all-loving and all-powerful. The term Brahman is not to be confused with 1) Brahma, the Creator God; 2) Brahmana, Vedic texts, nor with 3) brahmana, Hindu priest caste (English spelling: brahmin). See: Parameshvara, Parashakti, Parasiva.

Brahmana: (Sanskrit) "Knower of God." 1) One of four primary sections of each Veda; concerned mainly with details of yajna, or sacrificial fire worship, and specific duties and rules of conduct for priests, but also rich in philosophical lore. 2) The first of the four varnas, or social classes, comprising pious souls of exceptional learning, including priests, educators and humanity's visionary guides. Also spelled brahmin. See: brahmin, varna dharma, Vedas.

Brahmanda: (Sanskrit) "Egg of God," or "Cosmic egg." The cosmos; inner and outer universe. See: loka, three worlds, world.

brahmarandhra: (Sanskrit) "Door of Brahman." See: door of Brahman.

Brahma Sutra(s): (Sanskrit) "Threads (aphorisms) of the Absolute." Also known as the Vedanta Sutras, composed by Badarayana (ca 400 bce) as the first known systematic exposition of Upanishadic thought. Its 550 aphorisms are so brief as to be virtually unintelligible without commentary. It was through interpretations of this text, as well as the Upanishads themselves and the Bhagavad Gita, that later schools of Vedanta expressed and formulated their own views of the Upanishadic tenets. A third name for this important work is Shariraka Sutras, "aphorisms on the embodied soul." See: Upanishad, Vedanta.

Brahma Sutra Bhashya: (Sanskrit) A lengthy 13th-century commentary on the Brahma Sutras by Srikantha to establish a Vedic base for the Saivite qualified nondualism called Siva Advaita. See: Siva Advaita, Vedanta.

Brahma Sutra, Shankara Bhashya: (Sanskrit) Shankara's explanation of one of the three major treatises on Vedanta philosophy. See: Smarta.

brahmin (brahmana): (Sanskrit) "Mature or evolved soul." The class of pious souls of exceptional learning. From Brahman, "growth, expansion, evolution, development, swelling of the spirit or soul." The mature soul is the exemplar of wisdom, tolerance, forbearance and humility. See: varna dharma.

brahminical tradition: The hereditary religious practices of the Vedic brahmins, such as reciting mantras, and personal rules for daily living.

Brahmotsava: (Sanskrit) "God's festival, or foremost festival." Each temple has one festival of the year which is its major celebration. This is called Brahmotsava, often a ten-day event. See: festival, temple.

Brihadaranyaka Upanishad: (Sanskrit) One of the most important Upanishads, part of the Shatapatha Brahmana of the Yajur Veda. Ascribed to Sage Yajnavalkya, it teaches modes of worship, meditation and the identity of the individual self with the Supreme Self. See: Upanishad.

Brihaspati: (Sanskrit) "Lord of Prayer." Vedic preceptor of the Gods and Lord of the Word, sometimes identified with Lord Ganesha. Also names a great exponent of Saiva Siddhanta (ca 900). See: Ganesha.

brihatkutumba: (Sanskrit) "Extended family." Also called mahakutumba. See: extended family, joint family.

Buddha: (Sanskrit) "The enlightened." Usually the title of Siddhartha Gautama (ca 624-544 bce), a prince born of the Shakya clan--a Saivite Hindu tribe in eastern India on the Nepalese border. He renounced the world and became a monk. After his enlightenment he preached the doctrines upon which his followers later founded Buddhism. See: Buddhism.

buddhi: (Sanskrit) "Intellect, reason, logic." The intellectual or disciplined mind. Buddhi is characterized by discrimination (viveka), voluntary restraint (vairagya), cultivation of calmness (shanti), contentment (santosha) and forgiveness (kshama). It is a faculty of manomaya kosha, the instinctive-intellectual sheath. See: intellectual mind, kosha, mind (individual).

buddhi chitta: (Sanskrit) "Intellectual mind." See: buddhi, intellectual mind.

Buddhism: The religion based on the teachings of Siddhartha Gautama, known as the Buddha (ca 624-544 bce). He refuted the idea of man's having an immortal soul and did not preach of any Supreme Deity. Instead he taught that man should seek to overcome greed, hatred and delusion and attain enlightenment through realizing the Four Noble Truths and following the Eightfold Path. Prominent among its holy books is the Dhammapada. Buddhism arose out of Hinduism as an inspired reform movement which rejected the caste system and the sanctity of the Vedas. It is thus classed as nastika, "unbeliever," and is not part of Hinduism. Buddhism eventually migrated out of India, the country of its origin, and now enjoys a following of over 350 million, mostly in Asia. See: Buddha.

C

ca: Abbreviation for circa--Latin for "approximately"--used with dates that are not precise, e.g., ca 650 means "around the year 650."

cadenced: In measured, modulated, rhythmic voice.

callous: Unfeeling, not sensitive, lacking compassion or pity. See: yama-niyama.

camphor: Karpura. An aromatic white crystalline solid derived from the wood of camphor trees (or prepared synthetically from pinene), prized as fuel in temple arati lamps. See: arati, puja.

canon: The religious laws governing a sect or a religion. Body of accepted or authorized scriptures.

caste: A hierarchical system, called varna dharma (or jati dharma), established in India in ancient times, which determined the privileges, status, rights and duties of the many occupational groups, wherein status is determined by heredity. There are four main estates (varnas)--brahmin, kshatriya, vaishya and shudra--and innumerable castes, called jati. See: varna dharma.

catalyst: A person or thing acting as a stimulus upon another, whose presence brings about change. Difficulties can be a catalyst for spiritual unfoldment. Catalyst is sometimes used to name a teacher or facilitator.

causal body: Karana sharira, the inmost body; the soul form, also called anandamaya kosha, "bliss sheath," and actinic causal body. See: kosha, soul.

causal plane: Highest plane of existence, Sivaloka. See: loka.

cause: Karana. Anything which produces an effect, a result. --**efficient cause:** (nimitta karana) That which directly produces the effect; that which conceives, makes, shapes, etc., such as the potter who fashions a clay pot, or God who creates the world. --**material cause:** (upadana karana) The matter from which the effect is formed, as the clay which is shaped into a pot, or God as primal substance becoming the world. --**instrumental cause:** (sahakari karana) That which serves as a means, mechanism or tool in producing the effect, such as the potter's wheel, necessary for making a pot, or God's generative Shakti. See: maya, tattva.

ce: Abbreviation for "common era." Equivalent to the abbreviation ad. Following a date, it indicates that the year in question comes after the year zero in the Western, or Gregorian calendar, system. E.g., 300 ce is 300 years after the turn of the millennium. Cf: bce.

celestial: "Of the sky or heavens." Of or relating to the heavenly regions or beings. Highly refined, divine.

celibacy: Complete sexual abstinence. Also the state of a person who has vowed to remain unmarried. See: brahmachari, brahmacharya.

centillion: The number 1 followed by 600 zeros. An unimaginably large figure.

ceremony: A formal rite established by custom or authority as proper to special occasions. From the Latin caerimonia, "awe; reverent rite."

cf: An abbreviation for "compare." A scholastic notation.

chaitanya: (Sanskrit) "Spirit, consciousness, especially higher consciousness; Supreme Being." A widely used term, often preceded by modifiers, e.g., sakshi chaitanya, "witness consciousness," or bhakti chaitanya, "devotional consciousness," or Sivachaitanya, "God consciousness." See: chitta, consciousness, mind (five states), Siva consciousness.

Chaitanya: (Sanskrit) A renowned Vaishnava saint (1485-1534), revered today especially in Bengal and Orissa, remembered for his ecstatic states of devotion. He taught a dualistic philosophy in which bhakti (devotion) to the divine couple Radha and Krishna is the only means to liberation. Practice revolves mainly around kirtana, devotional singing and dancing. He gave prominence to the Gaudiya Vaishnava sect, of which several branches thrive today, including ISKCON. See: Krishna, Vaishnavism, Vedanta.

chakra: (Sanskrit) "Wheel." Any of the nerve plexes or centers of force and consciousness located within the inner bodies of man. In the physical body there are corresponding nerve plexuses, ganglia and glands. The seven principal chakras can be seen psychically as colorful, multi-petaled wheels or lotuses. They are situated along the spinal cord from the base to the cranial chamber. Additionally, seven chakras, barely visible, exist below the spine. They are seats of instinctive consciousness, the origin of jealousy, hatred, envy, guilt, sorrow, etc. They constitute the lower or hellish world, called Naraka or patala. Thus, there are 14 major chakras in all.

- The seven upper chakras, from lowest to highest, are: 1) **muladhara** (base of spine): memory, time and space; 2) **svadhishtana** (below navel): reason; 3) **manipura** (solar plexus): willpower; 4) **anahata** (heart center): direct cognition; 5) **vishuddha** (throat): divine love; 6) **ajna** (third eye): divine sight; 7) **sahasrara** (crown of head): illumination, Godliness.

- The seven lower chakras, from highest to lowest, are 1) **atala** (hips): fear and lust; 2) **vitata** (thighs): raging anger; 3) **sutata** (knees): retaliatory jealousy; 4) **talatala** (calves): prolonged mental confusion; 5) **rasatala** (ankles): selfishness; 6) **mahatala** (feet): absence of conscience; 7) **patala** (located in the soles of the feet): murder and malice. See: pradakshina, Naraka (also: individual chakra entries).

Chalukya: (Sanskrit) Indian dynasty (450-1189) in the Punjab area. Buddhism and Saivism were prominent. This dynasty completed the Buddhist Ajanta Cave frescoes and advanced the art of Hindu temple building.

chandana: (Sanskrit) "Sandalwood paste." One of the sacred substances offered during puja and afterwards distributed to devotees as a sacrament (prasada).

Chandas Vedanga: (Sanskrit) Auxiliary Vedic texts on the metrical rules of poetic writing. Chanda, meter, is among four linguistic skills taught for mastery of the Vedas and the rites of yajna. Chandas means "desire; will; metrical science." The most important text on Chandas is the Chanda Shastra, ascribed to Pingala (ca 200 bce). See: Vedanga.

Chandogya Upanishad: (Sanskrit) One of the major Upanishads, it consists of eight chapters of the Chandogya Brahmana of the Sama Veda. It teaches the origin and significance of Aum, the importance of the Sama Veda, the Self, meditation and life after death. See: Upanishad.

chandra: (Sanskrit) "The moon." Of central importance in Hindu astrology and in the calculation of the festival calendar. Considered the ruler of emotion.

Charvaka: (Sanskrit) "Good or sweet voice or word." Indian philosopher (ca 600 bce) who fashioned the school of pure materialism bearing his name. One of the great skeptics of all time. See: nastika.

charya pada: (Sanskrit) "Conduct stage." Stage of service and character building. See: pada, Saiva Siddhanta, Saivism.

chaturdharma: (Sanskrit) "Four dharmas:" rita, ashrama dharma, varna dharma and svadharmas. See: dharma.

chela: (Sanskrit) "Disciple." (Hindi.) A disciple of a guru; synonym for shishya. The feminine equivalent is chelina or cheli.

Chellappaswami: (Tamil) "Wealthy father." Reclusive siddha and 160th satguru (1840-1915) of the Nandinatha Sampradaya's Kailasa Parampara, he lived on Sri

Lanka's Jaffna peninsula near Nallur Kandaswami Temple in a small hut where today there is a small samadhi shrine. Among his disciples was Sage Yogaswami, whom he trained intensely for five years and initiated as his successor. See: Kailasa Parampara, Natha Sampradaya.

Chennabasavanna: (Sanskrit) "Little Basavanna." The 12th-century theologian who systematized the religious doctrine of Vira Saivism.

Chidambaram: (Tamil) "Hall of Consciousness." A very famous South Indian Siva Nataraja temple. See: Nataraja.

Chinna Bomman: (Tamil) King of Vellore, an area near Chennai (1559-1579), patron and disciple of Appaya Dikshita.

chit: (Sanskrit) "Consciousness" or "awareness." Philosophically, "pure awareness; transcendent consciousness," as in Sat-chit-ananda. In mundane usage, chit means "perception; consciousness." See: awareness, chitta, consciousness, mind (universal), sakshin.

chitsabha: (Sanskrit) "Hall of consciousness." See: Nataraja.

chitta: (Sanskrit) "Mind; consciousness." Mind-stuff. On the personal level, it is that in which mental impressions and experiences are recorded. Seat of the conscious, subconscious and superconscious states, and of the three-fold mental faculty, called antahkarana, consisting of buddhi, manas and ahamkara. See: awareness, consciousness, mind (individual), mind (universal), sakshin.

chudakarana: (Sanskrit) "Head-shaving sacrament." See: samskara.

circumambulation: Pradakshina. Walking around, usually clockwise. See: pradakshina, puja.

citadel: Fortress, usually situated on a height.

clairaudience: "Clear-hearing." Psychic or divine hearing, divyashravana. The ability to hear the inner currents of the nervous system, the Aum and other mystic tones. Hearing in one's mind the words of inner-plane beings or earthly beings not physically present. Also, hearing the nadanadi shakti through the day or while in meditation. See: clairvoyance, nada.

clairvoyance: "Clear-seeing." Psychic or divine sight, divyadrishti. The ability to look into the inner worlds and see auras, chakras, nadis, thought forms, non-physical people and subtle forces. The ability to see from afar or into the past or future--avadhijnana, "knowing beyond limits." Also the ability to separate the light that illumines one's thoughts from the forms the light illumines. Also, duradarshana, "far-

seeing," the modern Sanskrit term for television in India. Duradarshin names a seer or prophet. See: akasha.

coarse: Of poor quality; gross, rough cut. Not fine or refined.

coexistent: "Existing together."

cognition: Knowing; perception. Knowledge reached through intuitive, superconscious faculties rather than through intellect alone.

cognitive body: Vijnanamaya kosha. The most refined sheath of the astral, or subtle, body (sukshma sharira). It is the sheath of higher thought and cognition. See: astral body, kosha.

cohesive: Remaining together; not disintegrating.

coined: Made up; invented.

commemorative: Anything that honors the memory of a departed person or past event. See: shraddha.

commencement: Beginning.

commission: To give an order or power for something to be made or done.

commitment: Dedication or engagement to a long-term course of action.

commune: To communicate closely, sharing thoughts, feelings or prayers in an intimate way. To be in close rapport.

compatible: Capable of combining well; getting along, harmonious.

compensate: To make up for; counteract; recompense.

component: An element; one of the parts constituting a whole.

comprehend: Understand.

comprehensive: Including much or all.

comprise: To consist of; be composed of.

concealing grace: See: grace, tirodhana shakti.

conceive: To form or develop an idea, thought, belief or attitude.

concentration: Uninterrupted and sustained attention. See: raja yoga.

concept: An idea or thought, especially a generalized or abstract idea.

conception: Power to imagine, conceive or create. Moment when a pregnancy is begun, a new earthly body generated. --**the point of conception; the apex of creation:** The simple instant that precedes any creative impulse and is therefore the source and summit of the powers of creation or manifestation. To become conscious of the point of conception is a great siddhi.

concomitant: Accompanying a condition or circumstance.

concord: Harmony and agreement; peaceful relations.

condone: To forgive, pardon or overlook.

confer: To give or grant, especially an honor or privilege.

confession: An admission of guilt or acknowledgement of wrongdoing.

confidentiality: The ability to keep confidences or information told in trust; not divulging private or secret matters.

confine(s): Boundary, limits, border. To restrict or keep within limits.

conflagration: A large, destructive fire.

conform: To be in accord or agreement with.

conformity: Action in accordance with customs, rules, prevailing opinion.

congregational worship: Worship done as a group, such as synchronized singing, community prayers or other participatory worship by individuals sharing a strict membership to a particular organization, with no other religious affiliations. Hindu worship is strongly congregational within ashramas and tightly organized societies, but usually noncongregational in the general sphere. See: bhajana, kirtana, puja, yajna.

conquest: Act or process of overcoming.

conscience: The inner sense of right and wrong, sometimes called "the knowing voice of the soul." However, the conscience is affected by the individual's training and belief patterns, and is therefore not necessarily a perfect reflection of dharma. In Sanskrit the conscience is known as antaryamin, "inner guide," or dharmabuddhi, "moral wisdom." Other terms are sadasadvichara shakti "good-bad reflective power"

and samjnana, "right conception." It is the subconscious of the person--the sum total of past impressions and training--that defines the creedal structure and colors the conscience and either clearly reflects or distorts superconscious wisdom. If the subconscious has been impressed with Western beliefs, for example, of Christianity, Judaism, existentialism or materialism, the conscience will be different than when schooled in the Vedic dharma of Shaktism, Smartism, Saivism or Vaishnavism. This psychological law has to do with the superconscious mind working through the subconscious (an interface known as the subsuperconscious) and explains why the dharma of one's sampradaya must be fully learned as a young child for the conscience to be free of conflict. The Sanatana Dharma, fully and correctly understood provides the purest possible educational creedal structure, building a subconscious that is a clear, unobstructing channel for superconscious wisdom, the soul's innate intelligence, to be expressed through the conscience. Conscience is thus the sum of two things: the superconscious knowing (which is the same in all people) and the creedal belief structure through which the superconscious flows. This explains why people in different cultures have different consciences. See: creed, dharma, mind (individual).

conscious mind: The external, everyday state of consciousness. See: mind.

consciousness: Chitta or chaitanya. 1) A synonym for mind-stuff, chitta; or 2) the condition or power of perception, awareness, apprehension. There are myriad gradations of consciousness, from the simple sentience of inanimate matter to the consciousness of basic life forms, to the higher consciousness of human embodiment, to omniscient states of superconsciousness, leading to immersion in the One universal consciousness, Parashakti. Chaitanya and chitta can name both individual consciousness and universal consciousness. Modifiers indicate the level of awareness, e.g., vyashti chaitanya, "individual consciousness;" buddhi chitta, "intellectual consciousness;" Sivachaitanya, "God consciousness." Five classical "states" of awareness are discussed in scripture: 1) wakefulness (jagrat), 2) "dream" (svapna) or astral consciousness, 3) "deep sleep" (sushupti) or subsuperconsciousness, 4) the superconscious state beyond (turiya "fourth") and 5) the utterly transcendent state called turiyatita ("beyond the fourth"). See: awareness, chitta, chaitanya, mind (all entries).

consecrate: To declare holy, or designate for sacred or religious use.

consecrated temple: A temple duly and fully established in all three worlds through formal religious ceremony known as kumbhabhisheka.

consent: Accord; agreement; approval, especially for a proposed act.

console: To make someone feel less sad or disappointed. To comfort.

consolidate: To make stronger by bringing several things into a single whole.

consort: Spouse, especially of a king or queen, God or Goddess. Among the Gods there are actually no sexes or sexual distinctions, though in mythological folk-narratives, Hinduism traditionally represents these great beings in elaborate anthropomorphic depictions. Matrimony and human-like family units among the Gods are derived from educational tales intended to illustrate the way people should and should not live. See: Shakti.

contemplation: Religious or mystical absorption beyond meditation. See: ecstasy, raja yoga, samadhi.

contend: To hold as a belief or assert as fact.

continence (continent): Restraint, moderation or, most strictly, total abstinence from sexual activity. See: brahmacharya.

conversely: A word used to introduce a concept with terms similar to a previous one, but in reversed order.

conversion to Hinduism: Entering Hinduism has traditionally required little more than accepting and living the beliefs and codes of Hindus. This remains the basic factor of adoption, although there are, and always have been, formal ceremonies recognizing an individual's entrance into the religion, particularly the namakarana, or naming rite. The most obvious sign of true sincerity of adoption or conversion is the total abandoning of the former name and the choosing of the Hindu name, usually the name of a God or Goddess, and then making it legal on one's passport, identity card, social security card and driver's license. This name is used at all times, under all circumstances, particularly with family and friends. This is severance. This is adoption. This is embracing Hinduism. This is conversion. This is true sincerity and considered by born members as the most honorable and trusted testimony of those who choose to join the global congregation of the world's oldest religion. Many temples in India and other countries will ask to see the passport or other appropriate identification before admitting devotees of non-Indian origin for more than casual worship. It requires nothing more than one's own commitment to the process. Belief is the keynote of religious conviction, and the beliefs vary greatly among the different religions of the world. What we believe forms our attitudes, shapes our lives and molds our destiny. To choose one's beliefs is to choose one's religion. Those who find themselves at home with the beliefs of Hinduism are, on a simple level, Hindu. Formally entering a new religion, however, is a serious commitment. Particularly for those with prior religious ties it is sometimes painful and always challenging.

- The acceptance of outsiders into the Hindu fold has occurred for thousands of years. As Swami Vivekananda once said, "Born aliens have been converted in the past by crowds, and the process is still going on." Dr. S. Radhakrishnan

confirms the swami's views in a brief passage from his well known book *The Hindu View of Life*: "In a sense, Hinduism may be regarded as the first example in the world of a missionary religion. Only its missionary spirit is different from that associated with the proselytizing creeds. It did not regard it as its mission to convert humanity to any one opinion. For what counts is conduct and not belief. Worshipers of different Gods and followers of different rites were taken into the Hindu fold. The ancient practice of *vratyastoma*, described fully in the *Tandya Brahmana*, shows that not only individuals but whole tribes were absorbed into Hinduism. Many modern sects accept outsiders. Dvala's *Smriti* lays down rules for the simple purification of people forcibly converted to other faiths, or of womenfolk defiled and confined for years, and even of people who, for worldly advantage, embrace other faiths (p. 28-29)." See: Hindu, Hinduism.

cope: To contend with on equal terms. To face or deal with difficulties.

cosmic: Universal; vast. Of or relating to the cosmos or entire universe.

cosmic cycle: One of the infinitely recurring periods of the universe, comprising its creation, preservation and dissolution. These cycles are measured in periods of progressive ages, called *yugas*. Satya (or *Krita*), *Treta*, *Dvapara* and *Kali* are the names of these four divisions, and they repeat themselves in that order, with the Satya Yuga being the longest and the Kali Yuga the shortest. The comparison is often made of these ages with the cycles of the day: Satya Yuga being morning until noon, the period of greatest light or enlightenment, *Treta* Yuga afternoon, *Dvapara* evening, and *Kali* Yuga the darkest part of the night. Four *yugas* equal one *mahayuga*. Theories vary, but by traditional astronomical calculation, a *mahayuga* equals 4,320,000 solar years (or 12,000 "divine years;" one divine year is 360 solar years)--with the Satya Yuga lasting 1,728,000 years, *Treta* Yuga 1,296,000 years, *Dvapara* Yuga 864,000 years, and *Kali* Yuga 432,000 years. Mankind is now experiencing the *Kali* Yuga, which began at midnight, February 18, 3102 bce (year one on the Hindu calendar [see Hindu Timeline]) and will end in approximately 427,000 years. (By another reckoning, one *mahayuga* equals approximately two million solar years.) A dissolution called *laya* occurs at the end of each *mahayuga*, when the physical world is destroyed by flood and fire. Each destructive period is followed by the succession of creation (*srishti*), evolution or preservation (*sthiti*) and dissolution (*laya*). A summary of the periods in the cosmic cycles:

- 1 *mahayuga* = 4,320,000 years (four *yugas*)
- 71 *mahayugas* = 1 *manvantara* or *manu* (we are in the 28th *mahayuga*)

- 14 manvantaras = 1 kalpa or day of Brahma (we are in the 7th manvantara)
- 2 kalpas = 1 ahoratra or day and night of Brahma
- 360 ahoratras = 1 year of Brahma
- 100 Brahma years = 309,173,760,000,000 years (one "lifetime" of Brahma, or the universe). We are in Brahma Year 51 of the current cycle.
- At the end of every kalpa or day of Brahma a greater dissolution, called pralaya (or kalpanta, "end of an eon"), occurs when both the physical and subtle worlds are absorbed into the causal world, where souls rest until the next kalpa begins. This state of withdrawal or "night of Brahma," continues for the length of an entire kalpa until creation again issues forth. After 36,000 of these dissolutions and creations there is a total, universal annihilation, mahapralaya, when all three worlds, all time, form and space, are withdrawn into God Siva. After a period of total withdrawal a new universe or lifespan of Brahma begins. This entire cycle repeats infinitely. This view of cosmic time is recorded in the Puranas and the Dharma Shastras. See: mahapralaya.

Cosmic Dance: See: Nataraja.

Cosmic Soul: Purusha or Parameshvara. Primal Soul. The Universal Being; Personal God. See: Parameshvara, Primal Soul, purusha, Siva.

cosmology: "Cosmos-knowledge." The area of metaphysics pertaining to the origin and structure of the universe. Hindu cosmology includes both inner and outer worlds of existence. See: tattva.

cosmos: The universe, or whole of creation, especially with reference to its order, harmony and completeness. See: Brahmanda, loka, three worlds, tattva.

covenant: A binding agreement to do or keep from doing certain things.

covet: To want ardently, especially something belonging to another. To envy.

cranial chakras: The ajna, or third-eye center, and the sahasrara, at the top of the head near the pineal and pituitary glands. See: chakra.

creation: The act of creating, especially bringing the world into ordered existence. Also, all of created existence, the cosmos. Creation, according to the monistic-theistic view, is an emanation or extension of God, the Creator. It is Himself in another form, and not inherently something other than Him. See: cause, tattva.

creator: He who brings about creation. Siva as one of His five powers. See: creation, Nataraja, Parameshvara.

creed: **Shraddhadharana.** An authoritative formulation of the beliefs of a religion. Historically, creeds have arisen to protect doctrinal purity when religions are transplanted into foreign cultures. See: conscience.

cremation: **Dahana.** Burning of the dead. Cremation is the traditional system of disposing of bodily remains, having the positive effect of releasing the soul most quickly from any lingering attachment to the earth plane. In modern times, cremation facilities are widely available in nearly every country, though gas-fueled chambers generally take the place of the customary wood pyre. Embalming, commonly practiced even if the body is to be cremated, is ill-advised, as it injures the astral body and can actually be felt by the departed soul, as would an autopsy. Should it be necessary to preserve the body a few days to allow time for relatives to arrive, it is recommended that hot ice surround the body and that the coffin be kept closed. Arrangements for this service should be made well in advance with the mortuary. Note that the remains of enlightened masters are sometimes buried or sealed in a special tomb called a samadhi. This is done in acknowledgement of the extraordinary attainment of such a soul, whose very body, having become holy, is revered as a sacred presence, sannidhya, and which not infrequently becomes the spiritual seed of a temple or place of pilgrimage. See: bone-gathering, death, reincarnation, sannidhya.

cringe: To retreat, bend or crouch in an attitude of fear, especially from something dangerous or painful.

crown chakra: **Sahasrara chakra.** The thousand-petaled cranial center of divine consciousness. See: chakra.

crucial: Of supreme importance; decisive; critical.

crude: Raw. Not prepared or refined. Lacking grace, tact or taste. Uncultured.

crux: The essential or deciding point.

culminate: To reach the highest point or climax. Result.

culture: Development or refinement of intellect, emotions, interests, manners, and tastes. The ideals, customs, skills and arts of a people or group that are transmitted from one generation to another. Culture is refined living that arises in a peaceful, stable society. Hindu culture arises directly out of worship in the temples. The music, the dance, the art, the subtleties of mannerism and interaction between people all have their source in the humble devotion to the Lord, living in the higher, spiritual nature, grounded in the security of the immortal Self within.

D

Dakshinamurti: (Sanskrit) "South-facing form." Lord Siva depicted sitting under a banyan tree, silently teaching four rishis at His feet.

dampati: (Sanskrit) "House lord(s)." A term for husband and wife as the dual masters and sovereign guides of the Hindu home (dama). See: grihastha dharma.

dana: (Sanskrit) "Generosity, giving; a gift." See: yama-niyama.

dance: See: tandava, Nataraja.

danda: (Sanskrit) "Staff of support." The staff carried by a sadhu or sannyasin, representing the tapas which he has taken as his only support, and the vivifying of sushumna and consequent Realization he seeks. Danda also connotes "penalty or sanction." See: sadhu, sannyasin.

darshana: (Sanskrit) "Vision, sight." Seeing the Divine. Beholding, with inner or outer vision, a temple image, Deity, holy person or place, with the desire to inwardly contact and receive the grace and blessings of the venerated being or beings. Even beholding a photograph in the proper spirit is a form of darshana. Not only does the devotee seek to see the Divine, but to be seen as well, to stand humbly in the awakened gaze of the holy one, even if for an instant, such as in a crowded temple when thousands of worshipers file quickly past the enshrined Lord. Gods and gurus are thus said to "give" darshana, and devotees "take" darshana, with the eyes being the mystic locus through which energy is exchanged. This direct and personal two-sided apprehension is a central and highly sought-after experience of Hindu faith. Also: "point of view," doctrine or philosophy. See: shad darshana, sound.

Darwin's theory: Theory of evolution developed by Charles Darwin (1809-1882) stating that plant and animal species develop or evolve from earlier forms due to hereditary transmission of variations that enhance the organism's adaptability and chances of survival. See: evolution of the soul, nonhuman birth.

dashama bhaga vrata: (Sanskrit) "One-tenth-part vow." A promise that tithers make before God, Gods and their family or peers to tithe regularly each month--for a specified time, or for life, as they wish. See: dashamamsha.

dashamamsha: (Sanskrit) "One-tenth sharing." The traditional Hindu practice of tithing, giving one-tenth of one's income to a religious institution. It was formerly widespread in India. In ancient times the term makimai was used in Tamil Nadu. See: dashama bhaga vrata, purushartha.

dasa marga: (Sanskrit) "Servant's path." See: pada.

Dashanami: (Sanskrit) "Ten names." Ten monastic orders organized by Adi Shankara (ca 800): Aranya, Vana, Giri, Parvata, Sagara, Tirtha, Ashrama, Bharati, Puri and Sarasvati. Also refers to sannyasins of these orders, each of whom bears his order's name, with ananda often attached to the religious name. For example, Ramananda Tirtha. Traditionally, each order is associated with one of the main Shankaracharya pithas. See: Shankaracharya pitha, Smarta Sampradaya, Shankara.

daurmanasya: (Sanskrit) "Mental pain, dejection, sorrow, melancholy and despair." See: chakra.

daya: (Sanskrit) "Compassion." See: yama-niyama.

death: Death is a rich concept for which there are many words in Sanskrit, such as: mahaprasthan, "great departure;" samadhimarana, dying consciously while in the state of meditation; mahasamadhi, "great merger, or absorption," naming the departure of an enlightened soul. Hindus know death to be the soul's detaching itself from the physical body and continuing on in the subtle body (sukshma sharira) with the same desires, aspirations and occupations as when it lived in a physical body. Now the person exists in the in-between world, the subtle plane, or Antarloka, with loved ones who have previously died, and is visited by earthly associates during their sleep. Hindus do not fear death, for they know it to be one of the most glorious and exalted experiences, rich in spiritual potential. Other terms for death include panchatvam (death as dissolution of the five elements), mrityu (natural death), prayopavesha (self-willed death by fasting), marana (unnatural death, e.g., by murder). See: reincarnation, suicide, videhamukti.

deceit (deception): The act of representing as true what is known to be false. A dishonest action.

decentralized: Whose administrative agencies, power, authority, etc., are distributed widely, rather than concentrated in a single place or person. In Hinduism, authority is decentralized.

decked: Covered with fine clothing or ornaments.

defiled: Polluted, made dirty, impure.

deformity: Condition of being disfigured or made ugly in body, mind or emotions.

deha: (Sanskrit) "Body." From the verb dih, "to plaster, mold; anoint, fashion." A term used in the Upanishads, yoga texts, Saiva Agamas, Tirumantiram and elsewhere to name the three bodies of the soul: gross or physical (sthula), astral or subtle (sukshma) and causal (karana). A synonym for sharira. See: sharira.

Deism: A doctrine which believes in the existence of God based on purely rational grounds; a particular faith prominent in the 17th and 18th centuries adhered to by several founding fathers of the United States, including Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson. It holds that God created the world and its natural laws but is not involved in its functioning.

Deity: "God." Can refer to the image or murti installed in a temple or to the Mahadeva the murti represents. See: murti, puja.

delineate: To mark or trace out the boundaries of a thing, concept, etc.

delude: To fool as by false promises or improper concepts or thinking.

delusion: Moha. False belief, misconception.

denial: Saying "no." Opposing or not believing in the existence of something.

denomination: A name for a class of things, especially for various religious groupings, sects and subsects. See: parampara, sampradaya.

denote: To indicate, signify or refer to.

deplore: To be regretful or sorry about; to lament, disapprove.

deploy: To spread out; rearrange into an effective pattern.

deportment: The manner of bearing or conducting oneself; behavior.

depraved: Immoral; corrupt; bad; perverted.

desirous: Having a longing or desire; motivated by desire.

despair: The state of having lost or given up hope.

despise: To strongly dislike; look down upon with contempt or scorn.

destiny: Final outcome. The seemingly inevitable or predetermined course of events. See: adrishta, fate, karma.

Destroyer: Term for God Siva in His aspect of Rudra. See: Nataraja.

deva: (Sanskrit) "Shining one." A being living in the higher astral plane, in a subtle, nonphysical body. Deva is also used in scripture to mean "God or Deity." See: Mahadeva.

Devaloka: (Sanskrit) "Plane of radiant beings." A synonym of Maharloka, the higher astral plane, realm of anahata chakra. See: loka.

devamandira: (Sanskrit) "Abode of celestial beings." From mand, "to stand or tarry." A Hindu temple; also simply mandira. See: temple.

Devanagari: (Sanskrit) "Divine city [script]." The alphabetic script in which Sanskrit, Prakrit, Hindi and Marathi are written. A descendant of the Northern type of the Brahmi script. It is characterized by the connecting, horizontal line at the top of the letters. See: Sanskrit.

Devi: (Sanskrit) "Goddess." A name of Shakti, used especially in Shaktism. See: Shakti, Shaktism.

Devi Bhagavata Purana: (Sanskrit) A subsidiary text of the Siva Puranas.

Devi Gita: (Sanskrit) Twelve chapters (29 to 40) from the 7th book of Srimad Devi Bhagavatam, a Shakta scripture. It teaches external worship of the Deity with form and meditation on the Deity beyond form.

Devikalottara Agama: (Sanskrit) One recension (version) of the Sardha Trishati Kalottara Agama, (Sanskrit) a subsidiary text of Vatula Agama. (Sanskrit) Also known as Skanda Kalottara. (Sanskrit) Its 350 verses are in the form of a dialog between Karttikeya and Siva and deal with esoterics of mantras, initiations, right knowledge, faith and worship of Siva. See: Saiva Agamas.

Devi Upanishad: (Sanskrit) A Shakta Upanishad dealing with the nature and worship of the Goddess. See: Shaktism.

devoid: Completely without; empty.

devonic: Of or relating to the devas or their world. See: deva.

devotee: A person strongly dedicated to something or someone, such as to a God or a guru. The term disciple implies an even deeper commitment. See: guru bhakti.

Dhammapada: (Sanskrit) The holy book of Buddhism. See: Buddhism.

Dhanurveda: (Sanskrit) "Science of archery." A class of ancient texts on the military arts, comprising the Upaveda of the Yajur Veda. Dhanurveda teaches concentration, meditation, hatha yoga, etc., as integral to the science of warfare. See: Upaveda.

dharana: (Sanskrit) "Concentration." From dri, "to hold." See: meditation, raja yoga, shraddadharana, yoga.

dharma: (Sanskrit) "Righteousness." From dhri, "to sustain; carry, hold." Hence dharma is "that which contains or upholds the cosmos." Dharma, religion, is a complex and all-inclusive term with many meanings, including: divine law, law of being, way of righteousness, religion, ethics, duty, responsibility, virtue, justice, goodness and truth. Essentially, dharma is the orderly fulfillment of an inherent nature or destiny. Relating to the soul, it is the mode of conduct most conducive to spiritual advancement, the right and righteous path. There are four principal kinds of dharma, as follows. They are known collectively as --**chaturdharma:** "four religious laws." 1) --**rita:** "Universal law." The inherent order of the cosmos. The laws of being and nature that contain and govern all forms, functions and processes, from galaxy clusters to the power of mental thought and perception. 2) --**varna dharma:** (Sanskrit) "Law of one's kind." Social duty. Varna can mean "race, tribe, appearance, character, color, social standing, etc." Varna dharma defines the individual's obligations and responsibilities within the nation, society, community, class, occupational subgroup and family. An important part of this dharma is religious and moral law. See: jati, varna dharma. 3) **ashrama dharma:** "Duties of life's stages." Human or developmental dharma. The natural process of maturing from childhood to old age through fulfillment of the duties of each of the four stages of life--brahmachari (student), grihastha (householder), vanaprastha (elder advisor) and sannyasa (religious solitaire)--in pursuit of the four human goals: dharma (righteousness), artha (wealth), kama (pleasure) and moksha (liberation). See: ashrama dharma. 4) **svadharma:** "Personal path, pattern or obligation." One's perfect individual pattern through life, according to one's own particular physical, mental and emotional nature. Svadharma is determined by the sum of past karmas and the cumulative effect of the other three dharmas. It is the individualized application of dharma, dependent on personal karma, reflected on one's race, community, physical characteristics, health, intelligence, skills and aptitudes, desires and tendencies, religion, sampradaya, family and guru.

- Within ashrama dharma, the unique duties of man and woman are respectively called stri dharma and purusha dharma. --**purusha dharma:** "Man's duty." Man's proper pattern of conduct; traditional observances, vocation, behavior and attitudes dictated by spiritual wisdom. Characterized by leadership, integrity, accomplishment, sustenance of the family. Notably, the married man works in the world and sustains his family as abundantly as he can. --**stri dharma:** (Sanskrit) "Woman's duty." Traditional conduct, observances, vocational and spiritual patterns which bring spiritual fulfillment and societal stability. Characterized by modesty, quiet strength, religiousness, dignity and nurturing of family. Notably, she is most needed and irreplaceable as the maker of the home and the educator of their children as noble citizens of tomorrow. See: grihastha dharma.

- A part of the varna dharma of each person is sadharana dharma--the principles of good conduct applicable to all people regardless of age, gender or class. --**sadharana dharma:** "Duties applicable to all." Listed in the Manu Shastras as: dhairya (steadfastness), kshama (forgiveness), dama (self-restraint), chauryabhava (nonstealing), shaucha (cleanliness), indriyanigraha (sense control), dhi (high-mindedness), vidya (learning), satya (veracity), akrodha (absence of anger). Another term for such virtues is --**samanya dharma:** "general duty," under which scriptures offer similar lists of ethical guidelines. These are echoed and expanded in the yamas and niyamas, "restraints and observances." See: yama-niyama.
- One other important division of dharma indicates the two paths within Hinduism, that of the family person, the grihastha dharma, and that of the monastic, the sannyasa dharma. --**grihastha dharma:** "Householder duty." The duties, ideals and responsibilities of all nonmonastics, whether married or unmarried. This dharma, which includes the vast majority of Hindus, begins when the period of studentship is complete and extends until the end of life. See: grihastha dharma. --**sannyasa dharma:** "Monastic duty." Above and beyond all the other dharmas ("ati-varnashrama dharma") is sannyasa dharma--the ideals, principles and rules of renunciate monks. It is the highest dharma. See: sannyasa dharma.
- --**apad dharma:** "Emergency conduct." This dharma embodies the principle that the only rigid rule is wisdom, and thus exceptional situations may require deviating from normal rules of conduct, with the condition that such exceptions are to be made only for the sake of others, not for personal advantage. These are notable exceptions, made in cases of extreme distress or calamity.
- --**adharma:** "Unrighteousness." Thoughts, words or deeds that transgress divine law in any of the human expressions of dharma. It brings the accumulation of demerit, called papa, while dharma brings merit, called punya. Varna adharma is violating the ideals of social duty, from disobeying the laws of one's nation to squandering family wealth. Ashrama adharma is failure to fulfill the duties of the stages of life. Sva-adharma is understood as not fulfilling the patterns of dharma according to one's own nature. The

Bhagavad Gita states (18.47), "Better one's svadharma even imperfectly performed than the dharma of another well performed. By performing the duty prescribed by one's own nature (svabhava) one incurs no sin (kilbisha)."

See: punya, papa, purity-impurity, varna dharma.

dharmasabha: (Sanskrit) "Religious assembly, congregation." A church.

Dharma Shastra: (Sanskrit) "Religious law book." A term referring to all or any of numerous codes of Hindu civil and social law composed by various authors. The best known and most respected are those by Manu and Yajnavalkya, thought to have been composed as early as 600 bce. The Dharma Shastras, along with the Artha Shastras, are the codes of Hindu law, parallel to the Muslim Sharia, the Jewish Talmud, each of which provides guidelines for kings, ministers, judicial systems and law enforcement agencies. These spiritual-parliamentary codes differ from British and American law, which separate religion from politics. (Contemporary British law is influenced by Anglican Christian thought, just as American democracy was, and is, profoundly affected by the philosophy of its non-Christian, Deistic founders.) The Dharma Shastras also speak of much more, including creation, initiation, the stages of life, daily rites, duties of husband and wife, caste, Vedic study, penances and transmigration. The Dharma Shastras are part of the Smriti literature, included in the Kalpa Vedanga, and are widely available today in many languages. See: Deism, Manu Dharma Shastras.

dhoti: (Sanskrit) (Hindi) A long, unstitched cloth wound about the lower part of the body, and sometimes passed between the legs and tucked into the waist. A traditional Hindu apparel for men. See: veshti.

dhriti: (Sanskrit) "Steadfastness." See: yama-niyama.

dhvaja: (Sanskrit) "Flag." Part of the pageantry of Hinduism, orange or red flags and banners, flown at festivals and other special occasions symbolize the victory of Sanatana Dharma. See: festival.

dhvajastambha: (Sanskrit) "Flag tree, flagpole." (Kodimaram in Tamil.) A tall cylindrical post usually behind the vahana in Agamic temples. Metaphysically, it acts as the complementary pole to the enshrined murti. These two together create an energy field to contain the temple's power. See: temple.

dhyana: (Sanskrit) "Meditation." See: internalized worship, meditation, raja yoga.

dichotomy: A division into two parts, usually sharply distinguished or contradictory. See: paradox.

Dieu Siva est amour omnipresent et Realite transcendante: French for "God Siva is Immanent Love and Transcendent Reality." It is an affirmation of faith which capsulizes the entire creed of monistic Saiva Siddhanta.

differentiation: State or condition of making or perceiving a difference.

diksha: (Sanskrit) "Initiation." Solemn induction by which one is entered into a new realm of awareness and practice by a teacher or preceptor through the bestowing of blessings and the transmission of pranas. Denotes initial or deepened connection with the teacher and his lineage and is usually accompanied by ceremony. Initiation, revered as a moment of awakening, may be conferred by a touch, a word, a look or a thought. Most Hindu schools, and especially Saivism, teach that only with initiation from a satguru is enlightenment attainable. Sought after by all Hindus is the diksha called shaktipata, "descent of grace," which, often coming unbidden, stirs and arouses the mystic kundalini force. Central Saivite dikshas include samaya, vishesha, nirvana and abhisheka. See: grace, shaktipata, sound.

Dipavali: (Sanskrit) "Row of Lights." A very popular home and community festival during which Hindus of all denominations light oil or electric lights and set off fireworks in a joyful celebration of the victory of good over evil, light over darkness. It is a Hindu solidarity day and is considered the greatest national festival of India. In several countries, including Nepal, Malaysia, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Trinidad and Tobago, it is an inter-religious event and a national holiday. It occurs in October-November.

dipolar: Relating to two poles instead of only one. A philosophy is said to be dipolar when it embraces both of two contradictory (or apparently contradictory) propositions, concepts, tendencies, etc. For example, panentheism is dipolar in that it accepts the truth of God's being (and being in) the world, and also the truth that He transcends the world. Instead of saying "it is either this or that," a dipolar position says "it is both this and that." See: dvaita-advaita.

discordant: Not in accord. Disagreeing; clashing; out of harmony.

discrimination: Viveka. Act or ability to distinguish or perceive differences. In spirituality, the ability to distinguish between right and wrong, real and apparent, eternal and transient, as in the Upanishadic maxim, Neti, neti, "It is not this, it is not that." See: conscience.

disheveled: Untidy hair, clothing or general appearance. Rumpled.

dismay: Loss of courage or confidence before danger. Fearful worry.

dispassionate: Free from emotion or passion. Calm; impartial; detached.

dispatch: To send off promptly, especially on an errand. To finish quickly.

dispel: To cause to go in various directions. To scatter and drive away; disperse.

dissolution: Dissolving or breaking up into parts. An alternative term for destruction. See: absorption, mahapralaya, Nataraja.

distort: To twist out of shape. To misrepresent.

divergent: Going off in different directions; deviating or varying.

Divine Mother: Shakti, especially as Personal Goddess, as conceived of and worshiped by Shaktas. See: Shakti, Shaktism.

dominion: Rulership; domain. **--hold dominion over:** To be king, ruler, lord, or master of (a world, realm, etc).

don: To put on (a piece of clothing).

door of Brahman: Brahmarandhra; also called nirvana chakra. A subtle or esoteric aperture in the crown of the head, the opening of sushumna nadi through which kundalini enters in ultimate Self Realization, and the spirit escapes at death. Only the spirits of the truly pure leave the body in this way. Samsaris take a downward course. See: jnana, kundalini, videhamukti.

dormant: Sleeping; inactive; not functioning.

dosha: (Sanskrit) "Bodily humor; individual constitution." Three bodily humors, which according to ayurveda regulate the body, govern its proper functioning and determine its unique constitution. These are vata, the air humor; pitta, the fire humor; and kapha, the water humor. Vata has its seat in the intestinal area, pitta in the stomach, and kapha in the lung area. They govern the creation, preservation and dissolution of bodily tissue. Vata humor is metabolic, nerve energy. Pitta is the catabolic, fire energy. Kapha is the anabolic, nutritive energy. The three doshas (tridosha) also give rise to the various emotions and correspond to the three gunas, "qualities:" sattva (quiescence--vata), rajas (activity--pitta) and tamas (inertia--kapha). See: ayurveda, kapha, pitta, vata.

dross: Waste matter; useless byproduct.

dual: Having or composed of two parts or kinds. **--duality:** A state or condition of being dual. **--realm of duality:** The phenomenal world, where each thing exists along with its opposite: joy and sorrow, etc.

dualism: See: dvaita-advaita.

duly: At the proper time, in the proper manner; as required.

Durga: (Sanskrit) "She who is incomprehensible or difficult to reach." A form of Shakti worshiped in Her gracious as well as terrifying aspect. Destroyer of demons, She is worshiped during an annual festival called Durga puja, especially popular among Bengalis. See: Shakti, Shaktism.

Durvasas: (Sanskrit) A great sage (date unknown) who, according to Kashmir Saivism, was commissioned by Lord Siva to revive the knowledge of the Saiva Agamas, whereupon he created three "mind-born" sons--Tryambaka to disseminate advaita, Srinatha to teach monistic theism, and Amardaka to postulate dualism.

dvaita-advaita: (Sanskrit) "Dual-nondual; twoness-not twoness." Among the most important terms in the classification of Hindu philosophies. Dvaita and advaita define two ends of a vast spectrum. --**dvaita:** The doctrine of dualism, according to which reality is ultimately composed of two irreducible principles, entities, truths, etc. God and soul, for example, are seen as eternally separate. --**dualistic:** Of or relating to dualism, concepts, writings, theories which treat dualities (good-and-evil, high-and-low, them-and-us) as fixed, rather than transcendable. --**pluralism:** A form of non-monism which emphasizes three or more eternally separate realities, e.g., God, soul and world. --**advaita:** The doctrine of nondualism or monism, that reality is ultimately composed of one whole principle, substance or God, with no independent parts. In essence, all is God. --**monistic theism:** A dipolar view which encompasses both monism and dualism. See: anekavada, dipolar, monistic theism, pluralistic realism.

dvaitic (dvaita) Siddhanta: (Sanskrit) "Dualistic final conclusions." Refers to schools of Saiva Siddhanta that postulate God, soul and world as three eternally distinct and separate realities. See: Pati-pashu-pasha, Saiva Siddhanta.

E

earrings: Decorative jewelry worn in the ears by Hindu women and many men. Yogis, especially those of the Natha tradition, wear large earrings to stimulate the psychic nadis connected to the ears. Traditionally, the ascetic Kanphatis ("split-eared ones") split the cartilage of their ears to accommodate massive earrings. Ear-piercing for earrings is said to bring health (right ear) and wealth (left ear). See: Kanphati, samskaras of childhood.

ecclesiastical: "Of the church or clergy." By extension, relating to the authoritative body of any religion, sect or lineage. Having to do with an assembly of spiritual leaders and their jurisdiction.

ecology: The science of relations between organisms and their environment.

ecstasy (ecstatic): State of being overtaken by emotion such as joy or wonder. Literally, "standing outside oneself." See: enstasy, samadhi.

ecumenical: General or universal. --**ecumenism:** the principles or practices of promoting worldwide cooperation and better understanding among differing denominations, especially among Christians. From the Greek oecumene, "the inhabited world." A Christian term. The broader term interfaith is used by all religions striving for peace and harmony.

efficacious: Producing or capable of producing the desired effect.

efficient cause: Nimitta karana. That which directly produces the effect; that which conceives, makes, shapes, etc. See: cause.

effulgent: Bright, radiant; emitting its own light.

egalitarian: Equalitarian. Characterized by the belief in the equal sharing of powers, rights or responsibility among all people.

ego: The external personality or sense of "I" and "mine." Broadly, individual identity. In Saiva Siddhanta and other schools, the ego is equated with the tattva of ahamkara, "I-maker," which bestows the sense of I-ness, individuality and separateness from God. See: ahamkara, anava.

eligible: Qualified; suitable; desirable.

eliminate: To remove; get rid of; reject.

elixir: Hypothetical substance that would change any metal into gold or prolong life indefinitely. An English term for soma, a magical beverage celebrated in ancient Vedic hymns and which played an important role in worship rites. See: amrita.

elliptical: Having the shape of an ellipse (more or less egg-shaped).

elusive: Tending to escape one's grasp or understanding. Hard to capture.

emanation: To "flow out from." Abhasa. To come forth from a source, to be emitted or issued from. A monistic doctrine of creation whereby God issues forth manifestation like rays from the sun or sparks from a fire. See: abhasa.

emancipator: That which, or one who, liberates.

eminent: High; above others in stature, rank or achievement. Renowned or distinguished; prominent, conspicuous. Not to be confused with: 1) imminent, about to happen; 2) emanate, to issue from; 3) immanent, inherent or indwelling.

empower: To give power or authority to a person or society. Strengthen.

emulate: To imitate. To attempt to equal or surpass someone, generally by copying his ways, talents or successes.

encompass: To surround or encircle; to include.

endow: To give. To provide with a quality or characteristic.

enhance: To improve, make better.

enlightened: Having attained enlightenment, Self Realization. A jnani or jivanmukta. See: jivanmukta, jnana, Self Realization.

enlightenment: For Saiva monists, Self Realization, samadhi without seed (nirvikalpa samadhi); the ultimate attainment, sometimes referred to as Paramatma darshana, or as atma darshana, "Self vision" (a term which appears in Patanjali's Yoga Sutras). Enlightenment is the experience-nonexperience resulting in the realization of one's transcendent Self--Parasiva--which exists beyond time, form and space. Each tradition has its own understanding of enlightenment, often indicated by unique terms. See: God Realization, kundalini, nirvikalpa samadhi, Self Realization.

enshrine: To enclose in a shrine. To hold as sacred and worthy of worship.

enstasy: A term coined in 1969 by Mircea Eliade to contrast the Eastern view of bliss as "standing inside oneself" (enstasy) with the Western view as ecstasy,

"standing outside oneself." A word chosen as the English equivalent of samadhi. See: ecstasy, samadhi, raja yoga.

enthrall: To hold in a spell; captivate; fascinate.

entourage: A group of accompanying attendants, associates or assistants.

entreat: To ask earnestly; to beseech, implore, plead or beg.

epic history: Long narrative poem in a high style about grand exploits of Gods and heroes. The Ramayana and Mahabharata are India's two great epic histories, called Itihasa. See: Itihasa, Mahabharata, Ramayana.

equanimity: The quality of remaining calm and undisturbed. Evenness of mind; composure.

equilibrium: Evenly balanced. A quality of good spiritual leadership. "Having attained an equilibrium of ida and pingala, he becomes a knower of the known." See: jnana.

equivalent: Equal, or nearly so, in quantity, volume, force, meaning, etc.

erotic: "Of love (from the Greek eros)." Of or arousing sexual passion.

erroneous: Containing or based on error; wrong.

eschew: To shun, avoid, stay away from.

esoteric: Hard to understand or secret. Teaching intended for a chosen few, as an inner group of initiates. Abstruse or private.

essence (essential): The ultimate, real and unchanging nature of a thing or being.
--essence of the soul: See: atman, soul.

esteem: To respect highly; to value.

estranged: "Made a stranger." Set apart or divorced from.

eternity: Time without beginning or end.

ether: Akasha. Space, the most subtle of the five elements. See: akasha, tattva.

ethics: The code or system of morals of a nation, people, religion, etc. See: dharma, pancha nitya karmas, punya, purity-impurity.

etymology: The science of the origin of words and their development. The history of a word. See: Nirukta Vedanga, Sanskrit.

evil: That which is bad, morally wrong, causing harm, pain, misery. In Western religions, evil is often thought of as a moral antagonism to God. This force is the source of sin and is attached to the soul from its inception. Whereas, for Hindus, evil is not a conscious, dark force, such as Satan. It is situational rather than ontological, meaning it has its basis in relative conditions, not in ultimate reality. Evil (badness, corruption) springs from ignorance (avidya) and immaturity. Nor is one fighting with God when he is evil, and God is not standing in judgment. Within each soul, and not external to it, resides the principle of judgment of instinctive-intellectual actions. God, who is ever compassionate, blesses even the worst sinner, the most depraved asura, knowing that individual will one day emerge from lower consciousness into the light of love and understanding. Hindus hold that evil, known in Sanskrit as papa, papman or dushta, is the result of unvirtuous acts (papa or adharma) caused by the instinctive-intellectual mind dominating and obscuring deeper, spiritual intelligence. (Note: both papa and papman are used as nouns and adjectives.) The evil-doer is viewed as a young soul, ignorant of the value of right thought, speech and action, unable to live in the world without becoming entangled in maya. --**intrinsic evil:** Inherent, inborn badness. Some philosophies hold that man and the world are by nature imperfect, corrupt or evil. Hinduism holds, on the contrary, that there is no intrinsic evil, and the real nature of man is his divine, soul nature, which is goodness. See: hell, karma, papa, Satan, sin.

evoked: To call forth; to conjure up; to summon, as to summon a Mahadeva, a God. See: puja, yajna.

evolution of the soul: Adhyatma prasara. In Saiva Siddhanta, the soul's evolution is a progressive unfoldment, growth and maturing toward its inherent, divine destiny, which is complete merger with Siva. In its essence, each soul is ever perfect. But as an individual soul body emanated by God Siva, it is like a small seed yet to develop. As an acorn needs to be planted in the dark underground to grow into a mighty oak tree, so must the soul unfold out of the darkness of the malas to full maturity and realization of its innate oneness with God. The soul is not created at the moment of conception of a physical body. Rather, it is created in the Sivaloka. It evolves by taking on denser and denser sheaths--cognitive, instinctive-intellectual and pranic--until finally it takes birth in physical form in the Bhuloka. Then it experiences many lives, maturing through the reincarnation process. Thus, from birth to birth, souls learn and mature.

- Evolution is the result of experience and the lessons derived from it. There are young souls just beginning to evolve, and old souls nearing the end of their earthly sojourn. In Saiva Siddhanta, evolution is understood as the removal of

fetters which comes as a natural unfoldment, realization and expression of one's true, self-effulgent nature. This ripening or dropping away of the soul's bonds (mala) is called malaparipaka. The realization of the soul nature is termed svanubhuti (experience of the Self).

- Self Realization leads to moksha, liberation from the three malas and the reincarnation cycles. Then evolution continues in the celestial worlds until the soul finally merges fully and indistinguishably into Supreme God Siva, the Primal Soul, Parameshvara. In his Tirumantiram, Rishi Tirumular calls this merger vishvagrasa, "total absorption. The evolution of the soul is not a linear progression, but an intricate, circular, many-faceted mystery. Nor is it at all encompassed in the Darwinian theory of evolution, which explains the origins of the human form as descended from earlier primates. See: Darwin's theory, mala, moksha, reincarnation, samsara, vishvagrasa.

exalt: To make high. To raise in status, glorify or praise.

excel: To stand out as better, greater, finer than others. To do well at something.

exclusive: Excluding all others. Saivites believe that there is no exclusive path to God, that no spiritual path can rightly claim that it alone leads to the goal.

exemplar: One regarded as worthy of imitation; a model. An ideal pattern to be followed by others.

exhaustive: "Drawn out." Very thorough; covering all details; leaving nothing out.

existence: "Coming or standing forth." Being; reality; that which is.

experience: From the Latin experior, "to prove; put to the test." Living through an event; personal involvement. In Sanskrit, anubhava.

expound: To explain or clarify, point by point.

extended family: Brihatkutumba or mahakutumba. One or more joint families plus their broader associations and affiliations. Unlike the joint family, whose members live in close proximity, the extended family is geographically widespread. The extended family is headed by the patriarch, called brihatkutumba pramukha (or mukhya), recognized as the leader by each joint family. He, in turn is under the guidance of the kulaguru, or family preceptor. It includes the following, in order of their precedence: priests of one's faith; elder men and women of the community; in-

laws of married daughters; married daughters, granddaughters, great-granddaughters, and the spouses and children of these married girls; members of the staff and their families and those closely associated with the joint family business or home; maternal great-grandparents and grandparents, parents, uncles and their spouses, aunts and their spouses, children and grandchildren of these families; very close friends and their children; members of the community at large. See: grihastha, grihastha dharma, joint family.

extol: To praise highly.

exultant: Rejoicing greatly. Immensely happy or triumphant.

F

fable: Myth or legend. A story, usually with animal characters, meant to illustrate moral principles. See: mythology, Panchatantra.

faith: Trust or belief. Conviction. From the Latin fides, "trust." Faith in its broadest sense means "religion, dharma." More specifically, it is the essential element of religion--the belief in phenomena beyond the pale of the five senses, distinguishing it sharply from rationalism. Faith is established through intuitive or transcendent experience of an individual, study of scripture and hearing the testimony of the many wise rishis speaking out the same truths over thousands of years. This inner conviction is based in the divine sight of the third eye center, ajna chakra. Rightly founded, faith transcends reason, but does not conflict with reason. Faith also means confidence, as in the testimony and reputation of other people. The Sanskrit equivalent is shraddha. Synonyms include astikya, vishvasa, dharma and mati.

family life: See: grihastha ashrama, extended family, joint family.

far-seeing: Duradarshana. Having the power of clairvoyance, also known as divyadrishti, "divine sight." See: clairvoyance, siddhi.

fast: Abstaining from all or certain foods, as in observance of a vow or holy day. Hindus fast in various ways. A simple fast may consist of merely avoiding certain foods for a day or more, such as when vegetarians avoid tamasic or rajasic foods or when nonvegetarians abstain from fish, fowl and meats. A moderate fast would involve avoiding heavier foods, or taking only juices, teas and other liquids. Such fasts are sometimes observed only during the day, and a normal meal is permitted after sunset. Serious fasting, which is done under supervision, involves taking only water for a number of days and requires a cessation of most external activities.

fate: From the Latin *fatum*, "prophetic declaration, oracle." In Western thought, fate is the force or agency, God or other power, outside man's control, believed to determine the course of events before they occur. According to Hindu thought, man is not ruled by fate but shapes his own destiny by his actions, which have their concomitant reactions. The Hindu view acknowledges fate only in the limited sense that man is subject to his own past karmas, which are a driving force in each incarnation, seemingly out of his own control. But they can be mitigated by how he lives life, meaning how he faces and manages his *prarabdha* ("begun, undertaken") karmas and his *kriyamana* ("being made") karmas. See: *adrishta*, *karma*, *destiny*.

fellowship: Companionship. Mutual sharing of interests, beliefs or practice. A group of people with common interests and aspirations.

festival: A time of religious celebration and special observances. Festivals generally recur yearly, their dates varying slightly according to astrological calculations. They are characterized by acts of piety (elaborate pujas, penance, fasting, pilgrimage) and rejoicing (songs, dance, music, parades, storytelling and scriptural reading). See: *sound*, *teradi*.

fetch: Retrieve. To go get a thing and bring it back.

finesse: Ability to handle situations with skill and delicacy.

firewalking: The trance-inducing ceremonial practice of walking over a bed of smoldering, red-hot coals as an expression of faith and sometimes as a form of penance. Participants describe it as a euphoric experience in which no pain is felt and no burns received. Many lose body consciousness during the walk. Firewalking is associated with folk-shamanic Shaktism and is popular among Hindu communities inside and outside India. See: *folk-shamanic*, *penance*, *Shaktism*.

five acts of Siva: *Panchakritya*. Creation, preservation, destruction, veiling and revealing. See: *Nataraja*, *Parameshvara*.

flux: Continuous movement or change.

folk narratives: Community or village stories which are passed from generation to generation through verbal telling--often a mixture of fact and fiction, allegory and myth, legend and symbolism, conveying lessons about life, character and conduct. The most extensive and influential of India's folk narratives are the *Puranas*. While these stories are broadly deemed to be scriptural fact, this contemporary Hindu catechism accepts them as important mythology--stories meant to capture the imagination of the common peoples and to teach them moral living. See: *fable*, *katha*, *mythology*, *Purana*.

folk-shamanic: Of or related to a tribal or village tradition in which the mystic priest, shaman, plays a central role, wielding powers of magic and spirituality. Revered for his ability to influence and control nature and people, to cause good and bad things to happen, he is the intermediary between man and divine forces. The term shaman is from the Sanskrit shramana, "ascetic," akin to shram, "to exert." See: Shaktism, shamanism.

forbearance: Self-control; responding with patience and compassion, especially under provocation. Endurance; tolerance. See: yama-niyama.

formerly: At an earlier time; in the past.

formless: Philosophically, atattva, beyond the realm of form or substance. Used in attempting to describe the wondrous, indescribable Absolute, which is "timeless, formless and spaceless." God Siva has form and is formless. He is the immanent Pure Consciousness or pure form. He is the Personal Lord manifesting as innumerable forms; and He is the impersonal, transcendent Absolute beyond all form. Thus we know Siva in three perfections, two of form and one formless. This use of the term formless does not mean amorphous, which implies a form that is vague or changing. Rather, it is the absence of substance, sometimes thought of as a void, an emptiness beyond existence from which comes the fullness of everything. In describing the Self as formless, the words timeless and spaceless are given also to fully indicate this totally transcendent noncondition. See: atattva, Parasiva, Satchidananda, void.

fortress: A fortified place; a fort.

foster: To help grow or develop.

fountainhead: A spring that is the source of a stream. The source of anything.

fruition: The bearing of fruit. The coming to fulfillment of something that has been awaited or worked for.

funeral rites: See: cremation, bone-gathering, samskaras of later life.

G

gaja: (Sanskrit) The elephant, king of beasts, representative of Lord Ganesha and sign of royalty and power. Many major Hindu temples keep one or more elephants.

galactic: Of or pertaining to our galaxy, the Milky Way (from the Greek gala, "milk") and/or other galaxies.

gana(s): (Sanskrit) "Number," hence "throng, troop; retinue; a body of followers or attendants." A troop of demigods--God Siva's attendants, devonic helpers under the supervision of Lord Ganesha. See: Ganapati, Ganesha.

ganachara: (Sanskrit) Loyalty to the community. One of five Vira Saiva codes of conduct. Also, name of a Vira Saiva saint. See: panchachara, Vira Saivism.

Ganapati: (Sanskrit) "Leader of the ganas." A surname of Ganesha.

Ganapati Upanishad: (Sanskrit) A later Upanishad on Lord Ganesha, not connected with any Veda; date of composition is unknown. It is a major scripture for the Ganapatians, a minor Hindu sect which reveres Ganesha as Supreme God and is most prevalent in India's Maharashtra state. See: Ganesha.

Gandharvaveda: (Sanskrit) "Science of music." A class of ancient texts on music, song and dance. It is the Upaveda of the Sama Veda. See: Upaveda.

Ganesha: (Sanskrit) "Lord of Categories." (From gan, "to count or reckon," and Isha, "lord.") Or: "Lord of attendants (gana)," synonymous with Ganapati. Ganesha is a Mahadeva, the beloved elephant-faced Deity honored by Hindus of every sect. He is the Lord of Obstacles (Vighneshvara), revered for His great wisdom and invoked first before any undertaking, for He knows all intricacies of each soul's karma and the perfect path of dharma that makes action successful. He sits on the muladhara chakra and is easy of access. Lord Ganesha is sometimes identified with the Rig Vedic God Brihaspati ("Lord of Prayer," the "Holy Word"), Rig Veda 2.23.1. See: gana, Ganapati, Mahadeva.

Ganesha Chaturthi: (Sanskrit) Birthday of Lord Ganesha, a ten-day festival of August-September culminating in a spectacular parade called Ganesha Visarjana. It is a time of rejoicing, when all Hindus worship together.

Ganesha Visarjana: (Sanskrit) "Ganesha departure." A parade usually occurring on the 11th day after Ganesha Chaturthi, in which the Ganesha murtis made for the occasion are taken in procession to a body of water and ceremoniously immersed and left to dissolve. This represents Ganesha's merging with the ocean of consciousness. See: Ganesha.

Ganges (Ganga): (Sanskrit) India's most sacred river, 1,557 miles long, arising in the Himalayas above Hardwar under the name Bhagiratha, and named Ganga after joining the Alakanada (where the Sarasvati is said to join them underground). It flows southeast across the densely populated Gangetic plain, joining its sister Yamuna (or Jumna) at Prayaga (Allahabad) and ending at the Bay of Bengal. See: Gangetic Plain.

Gangetic Plain: The densely populated plain surrounding India's most sacred river, the Ganges (Ganga), an immense, fertile area of 300,000 square miles, 90 to 300 miles wide. See: Ganges.

garbha: (Sanskrit) "Womb; interior chamber." The inside or middle of anything.

garbhadhana: (Sanskrit) "Womb-placing." The rite of conception. See: reincarnation, samskaras of birth.

garbhagriha: (Sanskrit) The "innermost chamber," sanctum sanctorum, of a Hindu temple, where the primary murti is installed. It is a small, cave-like room, usually made of granite stone, to which only priests are permitted access. Esoterically it represents the cranial chamber. See: temple.

Gargya: (Sanskrit) One of the known disciples of Lakulisha. See: Lakulisha.

Gautama: (Sanskrit) The name of the founder of the Nyaya school of Saivism, author of the Nyaya Sutras. Also, the Buddha (Siddhartha Gautama). See: Buddha, Buddhism, shad darshana.

gay: Homosexual, especially a male homosexual, though may also refer to females. See: bisexual, homosexual, heterosexual, sexuality.

gayatri: (Sanskrit) According with the gayatri verse form, an ancient meter of 24 syllables, generally as a triplet (tercet) with eight syllables each. From gaya, "song."

--**Gayatri:** The Vedic Gayatri Mantra personified as a Goddess, mother of the four Vedas.

Gayatri Mantra: (Sanskrit) 1) Famous Vedic mantra used in puja and personal chanting. Om [bhur bhuvah svah] tat savitur varenyam, bhargo devasya dhimahi, dhiyo yo nah prachodayat. "[O Divine Beings of all three worlds,] we meditate upon the glorious splendor of the Vivifier divine. May He illumine our minds." (Rig Veda 3.62.10 VE). This sacred verse is also called the Savitri Mantra, being addressed to Savitri, the Sun as Creator, and is considered a universal mystic formula so significant that it is called Vedamatri, "mother of the Vedas." 2) Any of a class of special tantric mantras called Gayatri. Each addresses a particular Deity. The Siva Gayatri Mantra is: Tryambakam yajamahe sugandhim pushtivardhanam, urvarukamiva bandhanan mrtyormukshiya mamrtat. "We adore the fragrant three-

eyed one who promotes prosperity. May we be freed from the bondage of death as a cucumber from its stalk, but not from immortality." This is a famous verse of the Yajur Veda (from Rudranamaka, or Sri Rudram), considered an essential mantra of Siva worship used in all Siva rites.

germinate: To sprout. To begin to develop.

ghanta: (Sanskrit) "Bell." Akin to ghanat, "to speak." An important implement in Hindu worship (puja), used to chase away asuras and summon devas and Gods. See: puja.

ghee: (Sanskrit) Hindi for clarified butter; ghrita in Sanskrit. Butter that has been boiled and strained. An important sacred substance used in temple lamps and offered in fire ceremony, yajna. It is also used as a food with many ayurvedic virtues. See: yajna.

Gheranda Samhita: i (Sanskrit) A Vaishnava manual on hatha yoga (ca 1675), still influential today, presented as a dialog between Sage Gheranda and a disciple. See: hatha yoga.

gloom: Darkness. Deep sadness or despair.

go: (Sanskrit) The cow, considered especially sacred for its unbounded generosity and usefulness to humans. It is a symbol of the earth as the abundant provider. For the Hindu, the cow is a representative of all living species, each of which is to be revered and cared for.

Goddess: Female representation or manifestation of Divinity; Shakti or Devi. Goddess can refer to a female perception or depiction of a causal-plane being (Mahadeva) in its natural state, which is genderless, or it can refer to an astral-plane being residing in a female astral body. To show the Divine's transcendence of sexuality, sometimes God is shown as having qualities of both sexes, e.g., Ardhanarishvara, "Half-woman God;" or Lord Nataraja, who wears a feminine earring in one ear and a masculine one in the other.

Godhead: God; Divinity. A term describing the essence or highest aspect of the Supreme Being.

God Realization: Direct and personal experience of the Divine within oneself. It can refer to either 1) savikalpa samadhi ("ecstasy with form") in its various levels, from the experience of inner light to the realization of Satchidananda, the pure consciousness or primal substance flowing through all form, or 2) nirvikalpa samadhi ("ecstasy without form"), union with the transcendent Absolute, Parasiva, the Self God, beyond time, form and space. In Dancing with Siva, the expression God

Realization is used to name both of the above samadhis, whereas Self Realization refers only to nirvikalpa samadhi. See: raja yoga, samadhi, Self Realization.

Gods: Mahadevas, "great beings of light." In Dancing with Siva, the plural form of God refers to extremely advanced beings existing in their self-effulgent soul bodies in the causal plane. The meaning of Gods is best seen in the phrase, "God and the Gods," referring to the Supreme God--Siva--and the Mahadevas who are His creation. See: Mahadeva.

God's power: See: Shakti.

gopura: (Sanskrit) South Indian temple entrance tower, often quite tall with ornate carvings. See: balipitha, temple.

Gorakshanatha: (Sanskrit) Profound siddha yoga master of the Adinatha Sampradaya (ca 950). Expounder and foremost guru of Siddha Siddhanta Saivism. He traveled and extolled the greatness of Siva throughout North India and Nepal where he and his guru, Matsyendranatha, are still highly revered. See: hatha yoga, Siddha Siddhanta, Siddha Siddhanta Paddhati.

Gorakshanatha Saivism: (Sanskrit) One of the six schools of Saivism, also called Siddha Siddhanta. See: Siddha Siddhanta, siddha yoga.

Gorakshapantha: (Sanskrit) "Path of Gorakshanatha." A synonym for Siddha Siddhanta. See: Saivism (six schools), Siddha Siddhanta.

Gorakshashataka: (Sanskrit) A text by Gorakshanatha, which along with Siddha Siddhanta Pradipika, extols the path of "Siva yoga," which is hatha-kundalini yoga emphasizing control over body and mind, awakening of higher chakras and nadi nerve system with the intent of realizing the Absolute, Parasamvid, and residing in the sahasrara chakra in perfect identity with Siva. See: Gorakshanatha, Siddha Siddhanta.

gotra: (Sanskrit) "Cowshed." Family lineage or subcaste stemming from a rishi or satguru and bearing his name. Originally described as several joint families sharing a common cowshed. See: caste, jati, varna dharma.

grace: "Benevolence, love, giving," from the Latin gratia, "favor, goodwill." God's power of revealment, anugraha shakti ("kindness, showing favor"), by which souls are awakened to their true, Divine nature. Grace in the unripe stages of the spiritual journey is experienced by the devotee as receiving gifts or boons, often unbidden, from God. The mature soul finds himself surrounded by grace. He sees all of God's actions as grace, whether they be seemingly pleasant and helpful or not. For him, his very love of God, the power to meditate or worship, and the spiritual urge which

drives his life are entirely and obviously God's grace, a divine endowment, an intercession, unrelated to any deed or action he did or could perform.

- In Saiva Siddhanta, it is grace that awakens the love of God within the devotee, softens the intellect and inaugurates the quest for Self Realization. It descends when the soul has reached a certain level of maturity, and often comes in the form of a spiritual initiation, called shaktipata, from a satguru.
- Grace is not only the force of illumination or revelation. It also includes Siva's other four powers--creation, preservation, destruction and concealment--through which He provides the world of experience and limits the soul's consciousness so that it may evolve. More broadly, grace is God's ever-flowing love and compassion, karuna, also known as kripa ("tenderness, compassion") and prasada (literally, "clearness, purity").
- To whom is God's grace given? Can it be earned? Two famous analogies, that of the monkey (markata) and that of the cat (marjara) express two classical viewpoints on salvation and grace. The markata school, perhaps represented more fully by the Vedas, asserts that the soul must cling to God like a monkey clings to its mother and thus participate in its "salvation." The marjara school, which better reflects the position of the Agamas, says that the soul must be like a young kitten, totally dependent on its mother's will, picked up in her mouth by the scruff of the neck and carried here and there. This crucial state of loving surrender is called prapatti. See: anugraha shakti, prapatti, shaktipata, tirodhana shakti.

grandeur: Greatness, magnificence; of lofty character; noble.

grantha: (Sanskrit) Literally, "knot," a common name for book--a term thought to refer to the knot on the cord that bound ancient palm-leaf or birch-bark manuscripts. Books are afforded deep respect in Hinduism, always carefully treated, never placed directly on the floor. Special books are not uncommonly objects of worship. Grantha also names an ancient literary script developed in South India. See: olai.

granthavidya: (Sanskrit) "Book knowledge." Bibliography; booklist, recommended reading.

grihastha: (Sanskrit) "Householder." Family man or woman. Family of a married couple and other relatives. Pertaining to family life. The purely masculine form of the

word is grihasthi. The feminine form is grihasthin. Grihasthi also names the home itself. See: ashrama dharma, extended family, grihastha dharma, joint family.

grihastha ashrama: (Sanskrit) "Householder stage." See: ashrama dharma.

grihastha dharma: (Sanskrit) "Householder law." The virtues and ideals of family life. This dharma includes all nonmonastics, whether married, single or gay. In general, grihastha dharma begins with the completion of the period of studentship and extends throughout the period of raising a family (called the grihastha ashrama). Specific scriptures, called Dharma Shastras and Grihya Shastras, outline the duties and obligations of family life. In Hinduism, family life is one of serving, learning and striving within a close-knit community of many relatives forming a joint family and its broader connections as an extended family under the aegis of a spiritual guru. Each is expected to work harmoniously to further the wealth and happiness of the family and the society, to practice religious disciplines and raise children of strong moral fiber to carry on the tradition. Life is called a jivayajna, "self-sacrifice," for each incarnation is understood as an opportunity for spiritual advancement through fulfilling one's dharma of birth, which is the pattern one chose before entering this world, a pattern considered by many as bestowed by God. In the majority of cases, sons follow in the footsteps of their father, and daughters in those of their mother. All interrelate with love and kindness. Respect for all older than oneself is a keynote. Marriages are arranged and the culture is maintained.

- The householder strives to fulfill the four purusharthas, "human goals" of righteousness, wealth, pleasure and liberation. While taking care of one's own family is most central, it is only part of this dharma's expectations. Grihasthas must support the religion by building and maintaining temples, monasteries and other religious institutions, supporting the monastics and disseminating the teachings. They must care for the elderly and feed the poor and homeless. Of course, the duties of husband and wife are different. The Tirukural describes the householder's central duties as serving these five: ancestors, God, guests, kindred and himself. The Dharma Shastras, similarly, enjoin daily sacrifice to rishis, ancestors, Gods, creatures and men. See: ashrama dharma, extended family, joint family, yajna.

griheshvara and grihini: (Sanskrit) From griha, "home," hence "lord and lady of the home." The family man, griheshvara (or grihapati), and family woman, grihini, considered as master and mistress of their respective realms, so they may fulfill their purusha and stri dharmas. Implies that both of their realms are equally important and inviolable. See: dharma.

Grihya Sutras: (Sanskrit) "Household maxims or codes." An important division of classical smriti literature, designating rules and customs for domestic life, including rites of passage and other home ceremonies, which are widely followed to this day. The Grihya Sutras (or Shastras) are part of the Kalpa Sutras, "procedural maxims" (or Kalpa Vedanga), which also include the Shrauta and Shulba Shastras, on public Vedic rites, and the Dharma Shastras (or Sutras), on domestic-social law. Among the best known Grihya Sutras are Ashvalayana's Grihya Sutras attached to the Rig Veda, Gobhila's Sutras of the Sama Veda, and the Sutras of Paraskara and Baudhayana of the Yajur Veda. See: Kalpa Vedanga, Vedanga.

gross plane: The physical world. See: loka, world, tattva.

Guha: (Sanskrit) An epithet of Karttikeya. "The interior one." --**guha:** "Cave." See: Karttikeya.

Guhavasi Siddha: (Sanskrit) A guru of central India (ca 675) credited with the modern founding of Saiva Siddhanta in that area, based fully in Sanskrit. Guhavasi--literally "cave-dweller; he who is hidden"--is also a name of Lord Siva.

Guheshvara: (Sanskrit) "Lord of the cave." A name for Lord Siva implying His presence in the heart or the interior of all beings.

Gujarat: (Sanskrit) State of West India. Capital is Ahmedabad, population 40,000,000, area 75,670 square miles.

guna: (Sanskrit) "Strand; quality." The three constituent principles of prakriti, primal nature. The three gunas are as follows. --**sattva:** Quiescent, rarified, translucent, pervasive, reflecting the light of Pure Consciousness. --**rajas:** "Passion," inherent in energy, movement, action, emotion, life. --**tamas:** "Darkness," inertia, density, the force of contraction, resistance and dissolution. The gunas are integral to Hindu thought, as all things are composed of the combination of these qualities of nature, including ayurveda, arts, environments and personalities. See: ayurveda, prakriti, tattva.

Gurkha: (Sanskrit) A Rajput people of the mountains of Nepal; famed warriors.

guru: (Sanskrit) "Weighty one," indicating an authority of great knowledge or skill. A title for a teacher or guide in any subject, such as music, dance, sculpture, but especially religion. For clarity, the term is often preceded by a qualifying prefix. Hence, terms such as kulaguru (family teacher), vinaguru (vina teacher) and satguru (spiritual preceptor). In Hindu astrology, guru names the planet Jupiter, also known as Brihaspati. According to the Advayataraka Upanishad (1418), guru means "dispeller (gu) of darkness (ru)." See: guru-shishya system, satguru.

guru bhakti: (Sanskrit) Devotion to the teacher. The attitude of humility, love and loyalty held by a student in any field of study. In the spiritual realm, the devotee strives to see the guru as his higher Self. By attuning himself to the satguru's inner nature and wisdom, the disciple slowly transforms his own nature to ultimately attain the same peace and enlightenment his guru has achieved. Guru bhakti is expressed through serving the guru, meditating on his form, working closely with his mind and obeying his instructions. See: guru, satguru, guru-shishya system, Kularnava Tantra.

Gurudeva: (Sanskrit) "Divine or radiant preceptor." An affectionate, respectful name for the guru. See: guru.

Guru Gita: (Sanskrit) "Song of the guru." A popular 352-verse excerpt from the Skanda Purana, wherein Lord Siva tells Parvati of the guru-disciple relationship. See: guru.

Guru Jayanti: (Sanskrit) Preceptor's birthday, celebrated as an annual festival by devotees. A padapuja, ritual bathing of his feet, is usually performed. If he is not physically present, the puja is done to the sri paduka, "holy sandals," which represent the guru and hold his vibration. See: padapuja.

gurukula: (Sanskrit) A training center where young boys live and learn in residence with their teacher. Kula means "family." See: ashrama, brahmacharya.

guru parampara: (Sanskrit) "Preceptorial succession" (literally, "from one teacher to another"). A line of spiritual gurus in authentic succession of initiation; the chain of mystical power and authorized continuity, passed from guru to guru. Cf: sampradaya.

Guru Purnima: (Sanskrit) Occurring on the full moon of July, Guru Purnima is for devotees a day of rededication to all that the guru represents. It is occasioned by padapuja--ritual worship of the guru's sandals, which represent his holy feet. See: guru-shishya system.

guru-shishya system: (Sanskrit) "Master-disciple" system. An important education system of Hinduism whereby the teacher conveys his knowledge and tradition to a student. Such knowledge, whether it be Vedic-Agamic art, architecture or spirituality, is imparted through the developing relationship between guru and disciple. The principle of this system is that knowledge, especially subtle or advanced knowledge, is best conveyed through a strong human relationship based on ideals of the student's respect, commitment, devotion and obedience, and on personal instruction by which the student eventually masters the knowledge the guru embodies. See: guru, guru bhakti, satguru.

gush: To flow out suddenly and plentifully.

H

hallowed: Sacred.

hamsa: (Sanskrit) "Swan;" more accurately, the high-flying wild goose *Anser indicus*. The vahana, vehicle, of the God Brahma. It has various meanings, including Supreme Soul and individual soul. It is a noble symbol for an adept class of renunciates (paramahansa)--winging high above the mundane, driving straight toward the goal, or of the discriminating yogi who--like the graceful swan said to be able to extract milk from water--can see the Divine and leave the rest. The hamsa mantra indicates the sound made by the exhalation (ha) and inhalation (sa) of the breath. See: paramahansa.

Harihara: (Sanskrit) "Vishnu-Siva." Also known as Shankaranarayana, an icon of the Supreme One, in which the right half is Siva and left half is Vishnu. It symbolizes the principle that Siva and Vishnu are not two separate Deities. See: Brahma, murti, Parameshvara, Vishnu.

hatha yoga: (Sanskrit) "Forceful yoga." Hatha yoga is a system of physical and mental exercise developed in ancient times as a means of rejuvenation by rishis and tapasvins who meditated for long hours, and used today in preparing the body and mind for meditation. Its elements are 1) postures (asana), 2) cleansing practices (dhauti or shodhana), 3) breath control (pranayama), 4) locks (bandha, which temporarily restrict local flows of prana) and 5) hand gestures (mudra), all of which regulate the flow of prana and purify the inner and outer bodies. Hatha yoga is broadly practiced in many traditions. It is the third limb (anga) of Patanjali's raja yoga. It is integral to the Saiva and Shakta tantra traditions, and part of modern ayurveda treatment. In the West, hatha yoga has been superficially adopted as a health-promoting, limbering, stress-reducing form of exercise, often included in aerobic routines. Esoterically, ha and tha, respectively, indicate the microcosmic sun (ha) and moon (tha), which symbolize the masculine current, pingala nadi, and feminine current, ida nadi, in the human body. The most popular hatha yoga manuals are Hatha Yoga Pradipika and the Gheranda Samhita. See: asana, kundalini, nadi, yoga, raja yoga.

Hatha Yoga Pradipika: (Sanskrit) "Light on hatha yoga." A 14th-century text of 389 verses by Svātāmarama Yogin which describes the philosophy and practices of hatha yoga. It is widely used in yoga schools today.

havana: (Sanskrit) "Fire pit for sacred offering; making oblations through fire." Same as homa. Havis and havya name the offerings. See: Agni, homa, yajna.

heart chakra: Anahata chakra. Center of direct cognition. See: chakra.

heaven: The celestial spheres, including the causal plane and the higher realms of the subtle plane, where souls rest and learn between births, and mature souls continue to evolve after moksha. Heaven is often used by translators as an equivalent to the Sanskrit Svarga. See: loka.

hell: Naraka. An unhappy, mentally and emotionally congested, distressful area of consciousness. Hell is a state of mind that can be experienced on the physical plane or in the sub-astral plane (Naraka) after death of the physical body. It is accompanied by the tormented emotions of hatred, remorse, resentment, fear, jealousy and self-condemnation. However, in the Hindu view, the hellish experience is not permanent, but a temporary condition of one's own making. See: asura, loka, Naraka, purgatory, Satan.

heterodox: "Different opinion." Opposed to or departing from established doctrines or beliefs. Opposite of orthodox, "straight opinion." See: nastika.

heterosexual: Of or characterized by sexual attraction for only members of the opposite sex. See: bisexual, homosexual, sexuality.

hierarchy: A group of beings arranged in order of rank or class; as a hierarchy of God, Gods and devas.

higher-nature, lower nature: Expressions indicating man's refined, soulful qualities on the one hand, and his base, instinctive qualities on the other. See: kosha, mind (five states), soul.

Himalayan Academy: An educational and publishing institution of Saiva Siddhanta Church founded by Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami in 1957. The Academy's objective is to share the teachings of Sanatana Dharma through travel-study programs, The Master Course, books and other publications--particularly the monthly newspaper Hinduism Today and Dancing with Siva, Hinduism's Contemporary Catechism--as a public service to Hindus worldwide. See: Hinduism Today, Subramuniyaswami.

Himalayas: (Sanskrit) "Abode of snow." The mountain system extending along the India-Tibet border and through Pakistan, Nepal and Bhutan.

himsa: (Sanskrit) "Injury; harm; hurt." Injuriousness, hostility--mental, verbal or physical. See: ahimsa.

Hindu: (Sanskrit) A follower of, or relating to, Hinduism. Generally, one is understood to be a Hindu by being born into a Hindu family and practicing the faith, or by declaring oneself a Hindu. Acceptance into the fold is recognized through the name-giving sacrament, a temple ceremony called namakarana samskara, given to born Hindus shortly after birth, and to self-declared Hindus who have proven their

sincerity and been accepted by a Hindu community. Full conversion is completed through disavowal of previous religious affiliations and legal change of name. While traditions vary greatly, all Hindus rely on the Vedas as scriptural authority and generally attest to the following nine principles: 1) There exists a one, all-pervasive Supreme Being who is both immanent and transcendent, both creator and unmanifest Reality. 2) The universe undergoes endless cycles of creation, preservation and dissolution. 3) All souls are evolving toward God and will ultimately find moksha: spiritual knowledge and liberation from the cycle of rebirth. Not a single soul will be eternally deprived of this destiny. 4) Karma is the law of cause and effect by which each individual creates his own destiny by his thoughts, words and deeds. 5) The soul reincarnates, evolving through many births until all karmas have been resolved. 6) Divine beings exist in unseen worlds, and temple worship, rituals, sacraments, as well as personal devotionals, create a communion with these devas and Gods. 7) A spiritually awakened master or satguru is essential to know the transcendent Absolute, as are personal discipline, good conduct, purification, self-inquiry and meditation. 8) All life is sacred, to be loved and revered, and therefore one should practice ahimsa, nonviolence. 9) No particular religion teaches the only way to salvation above all others. Rather, all genuine religious paths are facets of God's pure love and light, deserving tolerance and understanding. See: Hinduism.

Hindu cosmology: See: loka, three worlds.

Hinduism (Hindu Dharma): (Sanskrit) India's indigenous religious and cultural system, followed today by nearly one billion adherents, mostly in India, but with large populations in many other countries. Also called Sanatana Dharma, "eternal religion" and Vaidika Dharma, "religion of the Vedas." Hinduism is the world's most ancient religion and encompasses a broad spectrum of philosophies ranging from pluralistic theism to absolute monism. It is a family of myriad faiths with four primary denominations: Saivism, Vaishnavism, Shaktism and Smartism. These four hold such divergent beliefs that each is a complete and independent religion. Yet, they share a vast heritage of culture and belief--karma, dharma, reincarnation, all-pervasive Divinity, temple worship, sacraments, manifold Deities, the guru-shishya tradition and a reliance on the Vedas as scriptural authority. From the rich soil of Hinduism long ago sprang various other traditions. Among these were Jainism, Buddhism and Sikhism, which rejected the Vedas and thus emerged as completely distinct religions, disassociated from Hinduism, while still sharing many philosophical insights and cultural values with their parent faith. Though the genesis of the term is controversial, the consensus is that the term Hindu or Indu was used by the Persians to refer to the Indian peoples of the Indus Valley as early as 500 bce. Additionally, Indian scholars point to the appearance of the related term Sindhu in the ancient Rig Veda Samhita. Janaki Abhisheki writes (Religion as Knowledge: The Hindu Concept, p. 1): "Whereas today the word Hindu connotes a particular faith and culture, in ancient times it was used to describe those belonging to a particular region. About 500 bce we find the Persians referring to 'Hapta Hindu.' This referred to the region of Northwest India and the Punjab (before partition). The Rig Veda (the

most ancient literature of the Hindus) uses the word Sapta Sindhu singly or in plural at least 200 times. Sindhu is the River Indus. Panini, the great Sanskrit grammarian, also uses the word Sindhu to denote the country or region. While the Persians substituted h for s, the Greeks removed the h also and pronounced the word as 'Indoi.' Indian is derived from the Greek Indoi."

- Dr. S. Radhakrishnan similarly observed, "The Hindu civilization is so called since its original founders or earliest followers occupied the territory drained by the Sindhu (the Indus) River system corresponding to the Northwest Frontier Province and the Punjab. This is recorded in the Rig Veda, the oldest of the Vedas, the Hindu scriptures, which give their name to this period of Indian history. The people on the Indian side of the Sindhu were called Hindus by the Persians and the later Western invaders. That is the genesis of the word Hindu" (The Hindu View of Life, p. 12). See: Hindu.

Hindu solidarity: Hindu unity in diversity. A major contemporary theme according to which Hindu denominations are mutually supportive and work together in harmony, while taking care not to obscure or lessen their distinctions or unique virtues. The underlying belief is that Hinduism will be strong if each of its sects, and lineages is vibrant. See: Hinduism.

Hinduism Today: The Hindu family magazine founded by Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami in 1979, published by Himalayan Academy to affirm Sanatana Dharma and record the modern history of a billion-strong global religion in renaissance. This award-winning, lavishly illustrated, all color, computer-produced news and information resource reaches over 150,000 readers in over 100 countries throughout the world. See: Himalayan Academy.

Hiuen Tsang: Chinese pilgrim who toured India about 630. His travel diary is a rare and colorful source of information about the India of his day.

holy feet: The feet of God, a God, satguru or any holy person, often represented by sacred sandals, called sri paduka in Sanskrit and tiruvadi in Tamil. The feet of a divine one are considered especially precious as they represent the point of contact of the Divine and the physical, and are thus revered as the source of grace. The sandals or feet of the guru are the object of worship on his jayanti (birthday), on Guru Purnima and other special occasions. See: padapuja, paduka, satguru.

holy orders: A divine ordination or covenant, giving religious authority. Vows that members of a religious body make, especially a monastic body or order, such as the vows (holy orders of renunciation) given a sannyasin at the time of his initiation (sannyasa diksha), which establish a covenant with the ancient holy order of

sannyasa. Sannyasins, the wearers of the ochre robe, are the ordained religious leaders of Hinduism. See: sannyasa diksha.

homa: (Sanskrit) "Fire-offering." A sacred ceremony in which the Gods are offered oblations through the medium of fire in a sanctified fire pit, homakunda, usually made of earthen bricks. Homa rites are enjoined in the Vedas, Agamas and Dharma and Grihya Shastras. Many domestic rites are occasions for homa, including upanayana and vivaha. Major pujas in temples are often preceded by a homa. See: agni, havana, yajna.

homosexual: Of or characterized by sexual attraction for members of one's own gender. A modern synonym is gay, especially for males, while female homosexuals are termed lesbian. See: bisexual, gay, heterosexual, sexuality.

hri: (Sanskrit) "Remorse; modesty." See: yama-niyama.

hued: Having specific color.

human dharma: The natural growth and expression through four stages of life. Known as ashrama dharma. See: ashrama dharma, dharma.

humors (or bodily humors): See: ayurveda, bodily humor, dosha.

I

iccha shakti: (Sanskrit) "Desire; will." See: Shakti, trishula.

icon: A sacred image, usually of God or one of the Gods. English for murti. See: aniconic, murti.

iconoclastic: Opposed to widely accepted ideas, beliefs and customs. Also [but not used as such in this text], opposed to the worship or use of religious icons, or advocating their destruction.

ida nadi: (Sanskrit) "Soothing channel." The feminine psychic current flowing along the spine. See: kundalini, nadi, odic, pingala.

illusion (illusory): A belief, opinion or observation that appears to be, but is not in accord with the facts, truth or true values, such as the illusion created by a magician. See: avidya.

illustrious: Very luminous or bright; distinguished, famous; outstanding.

immanent: Indwelling; present and operating within. Relating to God, the term immanent means present in all things and throughout the universe, not aloof or distant. Not to be confused with imminent, about to happen; emanate, to issue from; eminent, high in rank.

immature: Not ripe; not fully grown, undeveloped. Still young. --**immature soul:** See: atman, evolution of the soul, soul.

immemorial (from time immemorial): From a time so distant that it extends beyond history or human memory.

immutable: Never changing or varying. See: Absolute Reality, relative.

impasse: A dead end; a passage with no escape. A difficulty with no solution.

impede: To obstruct or delay something; make difficult to accomplish. (Noun form: impediment.)

impediment: "That which holds the feet." Hindrance; obstacle. Anything that inhibits or slows progress.

impending: That which is about to happen; threatening.

imperishable: That which cannot die or decay; indestructible; immortal. With capital I, imperishable refers to God--the Eternal, Beginningless and Endless.

impermanence: The quality of being temporary and nonlasting.

impersonal: Not personal; not connected to any person.

impersonal being: One's innermost nature, at the level of the soul's essence, where one is not distinguished as an individual, nor as separate from God or any part of existence. The soul's essential being--Satchidananda and Parasiva. See: atman, essence, evolution of the soul, soul.

impersonal God: God in His perfections of Pure Consciousness (Parashakti) and Absolute Reality beyond all attributes (Parasiva) wherein He is not a person. (Whereas, in His third perfection, Parameshvara, Siva is someone, has a body and performs actions, has will, dances, etc.)

impetus: Anything that stimulates activity. Driving force; motive, incentive.

implore: To ask, beg, beseech or entreat earnestly or pathetically.

impoverished: Poor; reduced to a condition of severe deprivation.

inanimate: See: animate-inanimate.

inauspicious: Not favorable. Not a good time to perform certain actions or undertake projects. Ill-omened. See: auspiciousness, muhurta.

incandescent: Glowing with heat; white-hot. Radiant; luminous; very bright.

incantation: Mantraprayoga. The chanting of prayers, verses or formulas for magical or mystical purposes. Also refers to such chants (mantra). Vashakriya is the subduing or bewitching by charms, incantation or drugs. Incantation for malevolent purposes (black magic) is called abhichara. See: mantra.

incarnation: From incarnate, "to be made flesh." The soul's taking on a human body. --**divine incarnation:** The concept of avatara. The Supreme Being's (or other Mahadeva's) taking of human birth, generally to reestablish dharma. This doctrine is important to several Hindu sects, notably Vaishnavism, but not held by most Saivites. See: avatara, Vaishnavism.

incense: Dhupa. Substance that gives off pleasant aromas when burned, usually made from natural derivatives such as tree resin. A central element in Hindu worship rites, waved gently before the Deity as an offering, especially after ablution. Hindi terms include sugandhi and lobana. A popular term for stick incense is agarbatti (Gujarati). See: puja.

incisive: "Cutting into." Sharp or keen, such as a penetrating and discriminating mind. See: discrimination.

incognito: Without being recognized; keeping one's true identity unrevealed or disguised.

increment: An amount of increase, usually small and followed by others; a measure of growth or change.

individual soul: A term used to describe the soul's nature as a unique entity, emanated by God Siva (the Primal Soul), as a being which is evolving and not yet one with God. See: atman, essence, kosha, Parameshvara, soul.

individuality: Quality that makes one person or soul other than, or different from, another. See: ahamkara, ego, anava, soul.

indomitable: Not easily discouraged, defeated or subdued. Unconquerable.

Indra: (Sanskrit) "Ruler." Vedic God of rain and thunder, warrior king of the devas.

indriya: (Sanskrit) "Agent, sense organ." The five agents of perception (jnanendriyas), hearing (shrotra), touch (tvak), sight (chakshus), taste (rasana) and smell (ghrana); and the five agents of action (karmendriyas), speech (vak), grasping, by means of the hands (pani), movement (pada), excretion (payu) and generation (upastha). See: kosha, soul, tattva.

induce: To bring about, cause, persuade.

Indus Valley: Region of the Indus River, now in Pakistan, where in 1924 archeologists discovered the remains of a high civilization which flourished between 5000 and 1000 bce. There, a "seal" was found with the effigy of Siva as Pashupati, "Lord of animals," seated in a yogic posture. Neither the language of these people nor their exact background is known. They related culturally and carried on an extensive trade with peoples of other civilizations, far to the West, using sturdy ships that they built themselves. For centuries they were the most advanced civilization on Earth. See: Saivism.

indwell: To dwell or be in. "The priest asks the Deity to indwell the image," or come and inhabit the murti as a temporary physical body. See: murti.

I-ness: The conceiving of oneself as an "I," or ego, which Hinduism considers a state to be transcended. See: ahamkara, anava, mind (individual).

inexhaustible: Cannot be exhausted, used up or emptied. Tireless.

inexplicable: Beyond explaining or accounting for.

inextricable: Cannot be disentangled or separated from another thing.

infatuation: The magnetic condition of being captured by a foolish or shallow love or affection.

infinitesimal: Infinitely small; too small to be measured.

inflict: To give or cause pain, wounds, etc.

infuse: To transmit a quality, idea, knowledge, etc., as if by pouring. To impart, fill or inspire.

ingest: To take food, medicine, etc., into the body by swallowing or absorbing.

inherent (to inhere in): Inborn. Existing in someone or something as an essential or inseparable quality. --**inherent sin:** See: sin.

inherit: To receive from an ancestor, as property, title, etc.--or to reap from our own actions: "...seed karmas we inherit from this and past lives."

initiation (to initiate): Entering into; admission as a member. In Hinduism, initiation from a qualified preceptor is considered invaluable for spiritual progress. Usually the beginning of more advance learning. See: diksha, shaktipata, sannyasa diksha.

injunction: An urging; an order or firm instruction.

inmost: Located deepest within.

innate: Naturally occurring; not acquired. That which belongs to the inherent nature or constitution of a being or thing.

inner (innermost): Located within. Of the depths of our being. --**inner advancement (or unfoldment):** Progress of an individual at the soul level rather than in external life. --**inner bodies:** The subtle bodies of man within the physical body. --**inner discovery:** Learning from inside oneself, experiential revelation; one of the benefits of inner life. --**inner form (or nature) of the guru:** The deeper levels of the guru's being that the disciple strives to attune himself to and emulate. --**inner law:** The principles or mechanism underlying every action or experience, often hidden. Karma is one such law. --**inner life:** The life we live inside ourselves, at the emotional, mental and spiritual levels, as distinguished from outer life. --**inner light:** A moonlight-like glow that can be seen inside the head or throughout the body when the vrittis, mental fluctuations, have been sufficiently quieted. To be

able to see and bask in the inner light is a milestone on the path. See: vritti. **--inner mind:** The mind in its deeper, intuitive functions and capacities--the subsuperconscious and superconscious. **--innermost body:** The soul body. **--inner planes:** Inner worlds or regions of existence. **--inner self:** The real, deep Self; the essence of the soul, rather than the outer self with which we usually identify. **--inner sky:** The area of the mind which is clear inner space, free of mental images, feelings, identifications, etc. Tranquility itself. The superconscious mind, Satchidananda. See: akasha. **--inner truth:** Truth of a higher order. **--inner universes (or worlds):** The astral and causal worlds. See: kosha.

innumerable: So many as to be beyond counting.

inscrutable: That cannot be analyzed or understood. Mysterious; beyond examining.

insignia: Plural of insigne. Signs or symbols of identity, rank or office, such as a badge or emblem.

dakshina: (Sanskrit) A fee or honorarium given to a priest at the completion of any rite; also a gift given to gurus as a token of appreciation for their infinite spiritual blessings.

instinctive: "Natural or innate." From the Latin instinctus, "staff," "prick," a participle of instigare, "impelling," "pricking," "instigating." The drives and impulses that order the animal world and the physical and lower astral aspects of humans--for example, self-preservation, procreation, hunger and thirst, as well as the emotions of greed, hatred, anger, fear, lust and jealousy. The first steps on the spiritual path consist in learning to harness these tendencies and impulses and transmute their energies into the higher nature. See: manas, mind (individual), mind (three phases), yama-niyama.

instinctive mind: Manas chitta. The lower mind, which controls the basic faculties of perception, movement, as well as ordinary thought and emotion. Manas chitta is of the manomaya kosha. See: manas, manomaya kosha, yama-niyama.

instrumental cause: Sahakari karana. Cosmologically, the means of implementing creation. See: cause.

intellect: The power to reason or understand; power of thought; mental acumen. See: buddhi, intellectual mind.

intellectual mind: Buddhi chitta. The faculty of reason and logical thinking. It is the source of discriminating thought, rather than the ordinary, impulsive thought

processes of the lower or instinctive mind, called manas chitta. Buddhi chitta is of the manomaya kosha. See: buddhi, mind (individual).

internalize: To take something inside of oneself.

internalized worship: Yoga. Worship or contact with God and Gods via meditation and contemplation rather than through external ritual. This is the yogi's path, preceded by the charya and kriya padas. See: meditation, yoga.

interplay: Interaction between two or more things.

intervene: To come between, especially two people or parties, with the intent to effect a change between them. See: mediatrix.

interweave (interwoven): To weave together like threads into cloth. To closely interrelate; to blend.

intimacy: The state of being intimate or very close. Having a close rapport.

intrigue: Secret plotting or scheming.

intrinsic: Inward, essential; inherent. Belonging to the real nature of a being or thing. --**intrinsic evil:** See: evil.

intuition (to intuit): Direct understanding or cognition, which bypasses the process of reason. Intuition is a far superior source of knowing than reason, but it does not contradict reason. See: cognition, mind (five states).

invigorate: To give vigor, life or energy.

invocation (to invoke): A "calling or summoning," as to a God, saint, etc., for blessings and assistance. Also, a formal prayer or chant. See: mantra.

Iraivan: (Tamil) "Worshipful one; divine one." One of the most ancient Tamil names for God. See: San Marga Sanctuary.

Iraivan Temple: See: San Marga Sanctuary.

Isha: (Sanskrit) "Lord, master of all; superior, commanding, reigning." Isha and its derivative Ishana are very old names for God Siva found in the Rig Veda.

Ishanyaguru: (Sanskrit) ite brahmin of the Kalamukha sect who Basavanna, principal founding teacher of Vira Saivism, received instruction from in his youth. See: Basavanna, Vira Saivism.

Isha Upanishad: (Sanskrit) Last of the 40 chapters of Vajasaneyi Samhita of the Yajur Veda. A short, highly mystical scripture. See: Upanishad.

Ishta Devata: (Sanskrit) "Cherished or chosen Deity." The Deity that is the object of one's special pious attention. Ishta Devata is a concept common to all Hindu sects. Vaishnavas may choose among many Divine forms, most commonly Vishnu, Balaji, Krishna, Radha, Rama, Lakshmi, Hanuman and Narasinha, as well as the aniconic shalagrama, a sacred river rock. Traditionally, Smartas choose from among six Deities: Siva, Shakti, Vishnu, Surya, Ganesha and Kumara (or any of their traditional forms). For Shaktas, the Divine is worshiped as the Goddess, Shakti, in Her many fierce forms and benign forms, invoking the furious power of Kali or Durga, or the comforting grace of Parvati, Ambika and others. Saivites direct their worship primarily to Siva as represented by the aniconic Siva Linga, and the human-like murtis, Nataraja and Ardhanarishvara. In temples and scriptural lore, Siva is venerated in a multitude of forms, including the following 23 additional anthropomorphic images: Somaskanda, Rishabarudra, Kalyanasundara, Chandrashekhara, Bhikshatana, Kamadahanamurti, Kalari, Jalandara, Tripurari, Gajari, Virabhadra, Dakshinamurti, Kiratamurti, Nilakantha, Kankala, Chakradana, Gajamukhanugraha, Chandesanugraha, Ekapada, Lingodbhava, Sukhasana, Uma Maheshvara and Haryardha. See: murti, Shakti, Siva.

Ishtalinga: (Sanskrit) "Cherished, chosen or personal mark of God." (Ishta: "sought, desired.") For Vira Saivites it is the personal Sivalinga, ceremonially given by a priest shortly after birth, and worn on a chain or cord around the neck thereafter. See: Sivalinga, Vira Saivism.

Islam: The religion founded by Prophet Muhammed in Arabia about 625 ce. Islam connotes submission to Allah, the name for God in this religion. Adherents, known as Moslems, follow the "five pillars" found in their scripture, the Koran: faith in Allah, praying five times daily facing Mecca, giving of alms, fasting during the month of Ramadan, and pilgrimage. One of the fastest growing religions, Islam has over one billion followers, mostly in the Middle East, Pakistan, Africa, China, Indochina, Russia and neighboring countries. See: Koran, Mohammed.

issue forth: To come out; be created. To start existing as an entity. E.g., creation issues forth from Nataraja's drum. See: emanation, Nataraja, tattva.

Ishvara: (Sanskrit) "Highest Lord." Supreme or Personal God. See: Parameshvara.

Ishvarapujana: (Sanskrit) "Worship." See: yama-niyama.

Itihasa: (Sanskrit) "So it was." Epic history, particularly the Ramayana and Mahabharata (of which the famed Bhagavad Gita is a part). This term sometimes refers to the Puranas, especially the Skanda Purana and the Bhagavata Purana (or Srimad Bhagavatam). See: Mahabharata, Ramayana, Smriti.

itinerant: Traveling from place to place, with no permanent home. Wandering. See: monk, sadhu, vairagi.

J

Jabala Upanishad: (Sanskrit) Belongs to the Atharva Veda. This short scripture teaches of knowledge attained in renunciation. See: Upanishad.

Jagadacharya: (Sanskrit) "World teacher." In 1986 the World Religious Parliament of New Delhi named five world leaders who were most active in spreading Sanatana Dharma outside India. The five are: H.H. Swami Chinmayananda of Chinmaya Missions, India; Satguru Sivaya Subramuniaswami of Saiva Siddhanta Church and Himalayan Academy, USA; Yogiraj Amrit Desai of Kripalu Yoga Center, USA; Pandit Tej Ramji Sharma of Nepali Baba, Nepal; and Swami Jagpurnadas Maharaj, Mauritius.

Jaimini: (Sanskrit) Founder of the Mimamsa Darshana. See: shad darshana.

Jaiminiya Brahmana Upanishad: (Sanskrit) A philosophical discourse of the Sama Veda dealing with death, passage to other worlds and reincarnation. See: Upanishad.

Jainism: (Jaina) (Sanskrit) An ancient non-Vedic religion of India made prominent by the teachings of Mahavira ("Great Hero"), ca 500 bce. The Jain Agamas teach reverence for all life, vegetarianism and strict renunciation for ascetics. Jains focus great emphasis on the fact that all souls may attain liberation, each by his own effort. Their great historic saints, called Tirthankaras ("Ford-Crossers"), are objects of worship, of whom Mahavira was the 24th and last. Jains number about six million today, living mostly in India. See: Mahavira.

Janaloka: (Sanskrit) "Plane of creativity, or of liberated mortals." The third highest of the seven upper worlds, realm of vishuddha chakra. See: loka.

jangama: (Sanskrit) "Moving; wanderer." A term used by Vira Saivites, originally to name their mendicant, renunciates who walked as homeless sadhus, uplifting others. Now an order of Vira Saivite teachers. See: Vira Saivism.

japa: (Sanskrit) "Incantation." Practice of concentrated repetition of a mantra, often while counting the repetitions on a mala or strand of beads. It may be done silently or aloud. Sometimes known as mantra yoga. A major sadhana in Hindu spiritual practice, from the simple utterance of a few names of God to extraordinary feats of repeating sacred syllables millions of times for years on end. It is recommended as a cure for pride and arrogance, anger and jealousy, fear and confusion. It harmonizes

the doshas and quiets the vrittis. Filling the mind with divine syllables, awakening the divine essence of spiritual energies in the physical body, japa brings forth the amrita. For Saivites, Namah Sivaya in its various forms is the most treasured mantra used in japa. The mantra Hare-Rama-Hare-Krishna is among the foremost Vaishnava mantras. Japa yoga is said to be of 14 kinds: daily (nitya), circumstantial (naimittika), the japa of desired results (kamya), forbidden (nishiddha), penitential (prayashchitta), unmoving (achala), moving (chala), voiced (vachika), whispered (upanshu), bee, or murmured (bhramara), mental (manasa), uninterrupted (akhandā), nonuttered (ajapa) and circumambulatory (pradakshina). See: amrita, mantra, yama-niyama, yoga.

jatakarma: (Sanskrit) "Rite of birth." See: samskaras of birth.

jati: (Sanskrit) "Birth; genus; community or caste." See: varna dharma.

jayanti: (Sanskrit) "Birthday." See: Guru Jayanti.

jiva: (Sanskrit) "Living, existing." From jiv, "to live." The individual soul, atman, during its embodied state, bound by the three malas (anava, karma and maya). The jivanmukta is one who is "liberated while living." See: atman, evolution of the soul, jivanmukta, purusha, soul.

jivanmukta: (Sanskrit) "Liberated soul." A being who has attained nirvikalpa samadhi--the realization of the Self, Parasiva--and is liberated from rebirth while living in a human body. (Contrasted with videhamukta, one liberated at the point of death.) This attainment is the culmination of lifetimes of intense striving, sadhana and tapas, requiring total renunciation, sannyasa (death to the external world, denoted in the conducting of one's own funeral rites), in the current incarnation. While completing life in the physical body, the jivanmukta enjoys the ability to reenter nirvikalpa samadhi again and again. At this time, siddhis can be developed which are carried to the inner worlds after mahasamadhi. Such an awakened jnani benefits the population by simply being who he is. When he speaks, he does so without forethought. His wisdom is beyond reason, yet it does not conflict with reason. Nor does he arrive at what he says through the process of reason, but through the process of ajna-chakra sight. See: jivanmukti, jnana, kaivalya, moksha, Self Realization, Sivasayujya, videhamukti.

jivanmukti: (Sanskrit) "Liberation while living." The state of the jivanmukta. Contrasted with videhamukti, liberation at the point of death. See: death, jivanmukta, moksha, reincarnation, videhamukti.

jivayajna: (Sanskrit) "Self sacrifice." See: yajna.

jnana: (Sanskrit) "Knowledge; wisdom." The matured state of the soul. It is the wisdom that comes as an aftermath of the kundalini breaking through the door of

Brahman into the realization of Parasiva, Absolute Reality. The repeated samadhis of Parasiva ever deepen this flow of divine knowing which establishes the knower in an extraordinary point of reference, totally different from those who have not attained this enlightenment. Jnana is the awakened, superconscious state (karana chitta) working within the ordinary experience of the world, flowing into daily life situations. It is the fruition of the progressive stages of charya, kriya and yoga in the Saiva Siddhanta system of spiritual unfoldment. Jnana is sometimes misunderstood as book knowledge, as a maturity or awakening that comes from simply understanding a complex philosophical system or systems. Those who define jnana in this way deny that the path is a progression of charya-kriya-yoga-jnana or of karma-bhakti-raja-jnana. Rather, they say that one can choose his path, and that each leads to the ultimate goal. See: God Realization, door of Brahman, Self Realization, samadhi.

Jnanamrita: (Sanskrit) A treatise of poems by Gorakshanatha on the duties of a yogi. See: Gorakshanatha.

jnana pada: (Sanskrit) "Stage of wisdom." According to the Saiva Siddhanta rishis, jnana is the last of the four successive padas (stages) of spiritual unfoldment. It is the culmination of the third stage, the yoga pada. Also names the knowledge section of each Agama. See: jnana, pada.

jnana shakti: (Sanskrit) "Power of wisdom." One of Siva's three primary shaktis. Also a name for Lord Karttikeya's vel. See: Karttikeya. shakti, trishula.

jnana yoga: (Sanskrit) "Union of knowledge." Describes the esoteric spiritual practices of the fully enlightened being, or jnani. An alternative meaning, popularized by Swami Vivekananda, is the quest for cognition through intellectual religious study, as one of four alternate paths to truth, the other three being bhakti yoga, karma yoga and raja yoga. See: jnana, yoga.

Jnaneshvari: (Sanskrit) Foremost religious treatise in the Marathi language. Written by the Natha saint Jnaneshvar (or Jnanadeva) about 1290. It is a verse-by-verse commentary on the Bhagavad Gita.

jnani: (Sanskrit) "Sage." One who possesses jnana. See: jivanmukta, jnana.

joint family: Kutumba or kula. The Hindu social unit consisting of several generations of kindred living together under the same roof or in a joining compound. Traditionally, joint families live in a large single home, but in modern times accommodations are often in individual, nuclear homes within a shared compound. The joint family includes the father and mother, sons, grandsons and great-grandsons with their spouses, as well as the daughters, granddaughters and great-granddaughters until they are married--thus often comprising several married couples and their children. The head of the joint family, called kutumba mukhya

(also mukhya or kartri), is the father, supported by the mother, and in his absence, the elder son, guided by his mother and supported by his spouse. From an early age, the eldest son is given special training by his father to assume this future responsibility as head of the family. In the event of the father's death, sacred law does allow for the splitting of the family wealth between the sons. Division of family assets may also be necessary in cases where sons are involved in different professions and live in different towns, when there is an inability for all to get along under one roof, or when the family becomes unmanageably large.

- The main characteristics of the joint family are that its members 1) share a common residence, 2) partake of food prepared in the same kitchen, 3) hold their property in common and, 4) ideally, profess the same religion, sect and sampradaya. Each individual family of husband, wife and children is under the guidance of the head of the joint family. All work together unselfishly to further the common good. Each joint family extends out from its home to include a second level of connections as an "extended family (brihatkutumba or mahakutumba)." See: extended family, grihastha dharma.

juncture: A critical point in the development of events.

jyotisha: (Sanskrit) From jyoti, "light." "The science of the lights (or stars)." Hindu astrology, the knowledge and practice of analyzing events and circumstances, delineating character and determining auspicious moments, according to the positions and movements of heavenly bodies. In calculating horoscopes, jyotisha uses the sidereal (fixed-star) system, whereas Western astrology uses the tropical (fixed-date) method.

jyotisha shastri: (Sanskrit) "Astrologer." A person well versed in the science of jyotisha. See: jyotisha.

Jyotisha Vedanga: (Sanskrit) "Veda-limb of celestial science (astronomy-astrology)." Ancient texts giving knowledge of astronomy and astrology, for understanding the cosmos and determining proper timing for Vedic rites. (Jyoti means light [of the sun, fire, etc.]) See: jyotisha, Vedanga.

K

Kadaitswami: (Tamil) "Marketplace swami." The 159th satguru of the Nandinatha Sampradaya's Kailasa Parampara. Born ca 1804; attained mahasamadhi October 13, 1891. Renouncing his career as a judge in Bangalore, South India, Kadaitswami became a sannyasin and trained under the "Rishi from the Himalayas," who sent him on mission to Sri Lanka. He performed severe tapas on an island off the Jaffna coast, awakening many siddhis. For decades he spurred the Sri Lankan Saivites to greater spirituality through inspired talks and demonstrating siddhis. He initiated Chellappaswami as the next satguru in the parampara. Kadaitswami's initiation name was Muthyanandaswami. See: Kailasa Parampara, Natha Sampradaya.

Kadavul: (Tamil) "Beyond and within." An ancient Tamil name for Lord Siva meaning, "He who is both immanent and transcendent, within and beyond." See: Siva.

Kailasa: (Sanskrit) "Crystalline" or "abode of bliss." The four-faced Himalayan peak in Western Tibet; the earthly abode of Lord Siva. Associated with Mount Meru, the legendary center of the universe, it is an important pilgrimage destination for all Hindus, as well as for Tibetan Buddhists. Kailasa is represented in Shaktism by a certain three-dimensional form of the Sri Chakra yantra (also called kailasa chakra). See: Sri Chakra.

Kailasa Parampara: (Sanskrit) "Crystalline lineage." A spiritual lineage of 162 siddhas, a major stream of the Nandinatha Sampradaya, proponents of the ancient philosophy of monistic Saiva Siddhanta. The first of these masters that history recalls was Maharishi Nandinatha (or Nandikeshvara) 2,250 years ago, satguru to the great Tirumular, ca 200 bce, and seven other disciples (as stated in the Tirumantiram): Patanjali, Vyaghrapada, Sanatkumara, Sivayogamuni, Sanakar, Sanadanar and Sananthanar. Tirumular had seven disciples: Malangam, Indiran, Soman, Brahman, Rudran, Kalanga, and Kanjamalayam, each of whom established one or more monasteries and propagated the Agamic lore. In the line of Kalanga came the sages Righama, Maligaideva, Nadantar, Bhogadeva and Paramananda. The lineage continued down the centuries and is alive today--the first recent siddha known being the Rishi from the Himalayas, so named because he descended from those holy mountains. In South India, he initiated Kadaitswami (ca 1810-1875), who in turn initiated Chellappaswami (1840-1915). Chellappan passed the mantle of authority to sage Yogaswami (1872-1964), who in 1949 initiated the current satguru, Sivaya Subramuniaswami. See: Chellappaswami, Kadaitswami, Natha Sampradaya, Patanjali, Subramuniaswami, Tirumular, Vyaghrapada, Yogaswami.

kaivalya: (Sanskrit) "Absolute oneness, aloneness; perfect detachment, freedom." Liberation. Kaivalya is the term used by Patanjali and others in the yoga tradition to name the goal and fulfillment of yoga, the state of complete detachment from

transmigration. It is virtually synonymous with moksha. Kaivalya is the perfectly transcendent state, the highest condition resulting from the ultimate realization. It is defined uniquely according to each philosophical school, depending on its beliefs regarding the nature of the soul. See: moksha, samarasa, Sivasayujya, jnana.

Kaivalya Upanishad: (Sanskrit) A philosophical text of the Atharva Veda. This treatise teaches how to reach Siva through meditation.

kala: (Sanskrit) 1) "Time; to calculate." 2) "Black; of a black or dark blue color; death."

kala: (Sanskrit) "Part, segment; art or skill." 1) Cultural arts. (See: kala64). 2) A five-fold division of the cosmos based on the 36 tattvas, as explained in the Saiva Agamas. The five kalas--spheres, or dimensions of consciousness--are: 1) Shantyatitakala, "sphere beyond peace," the extremely rarified level of shuddha maya (actinic energy) in which superconsciousness is expanded into endless inner space, the realm of God Siva and the Gods; 2) Shantikala, "sphere of peace," the level within shuddha maya where forms are made of inner sounds and colors, where reside great devas and rishis who are beyond the reincarnation cycles; 3) Vidyakala, "sphere of knowing," the level within shuddhashuddha maya (actinodic energy) of subsuperconscious awareness of forms in their totality in progressive states of manifestation, and of the interrelated forces of the actinodic energies; 4) Pratishtakala, "sphere of resting, tranquility," the level within ashuddha maya (odic energy) of intellect and instinct; 5) Nivrittikala, "sphere of perdition, destruction; returning," the level within ashuddha maya of physical and near-physical existence, conscious, subconscious and sub-subconscious mind. See: tattva.

kala64 (chatuh shashti kala): (Sanskrit) "Sixty-four arts." A classical curriculum of sacred sciences, studies, arts and skills of cultured living listed in various Hindu shastras. Its most well-known appearance is in the Kama Sutra, an extensive manual devoted to sensual pleasures. The Kama Sutra details as its primary subject matter the 64 secret arts, abhyantara kala, of erotic love. In addition to these it lists 64 bahya kalas, or practical arts, as required study for cultured persons. They are: 1) singing, 2) instrumental music, 3) dancing, 4) painting, 5) forehead adornments, 6) making decorative floral and grain designs on the floor, 7) home and temple flower arranging, 8) personal grooming, 9) mosaic tiling, 10) bedroom arrangements, 11) creating music with water, 12) splashing and squirting with water, 13) secret mantras, 14) making flower garlands, 15) head adornments, 16) dressing, 17) costume decorations, 18) perfumery, 19) jewelry making, 20) magic and illusions, 21) ointments for charm and virility, 22) manual dexterity, 23) skills of cooking, eating and drinking, 24) beverage and dessert preparation, 25) sewing (making and mending garments), 26) embroidery, 27) playing vina and drum, 28) riddles and rhymes, 29) poetry games, 30) tongue twisters and difficult recitation, 31) literary recitation, 32) drama and story telling, 33) verse composition game, 34) furniture caning, 35) erotic devices and knowledge of sexual arts, 36) crafting wooden

furniture, 37) architecture and house construction, 38) distinguishing between ordinary and precious stones and metals, 39) metal-working, 40) gems and mining, 41) gardening and horticulture, 42) games of wager involving animals, 43) training parrots and mynas to speak, 44) hairdressing, 45) coding messages, 46) speaking in code, 47) knowledge of foreign languages and dialects, 48) making flower carriages, 49) spells, charms and omens, 50) making simple mechanical devices, 51) memory training, 52) game of reciting verses from hearing, 53) decoding messages, 54) the meanings of words, 55) dictionary studies, 56) prosody and rhetoric, 57) impersonation, 58) artful dressing, 59) games of dice, 60) the game of akarsha (a dice game played on a board), 61) making dolls and toys for children, 62) personal etiquette and animal training, 63) knowledge of dharmic warfare and victory, and 64) physical culture.

- These are among the skills traditionally taught to both genders, while emphasizing masculinity in men and femininity in women. Their subject matter draws on such texts as the Vedangas and Upavedas, and the Shilpa Shastras, or craft manuals. Through the centuries, writers have prescribed many more skills and accomplishments. These include sculpture, pottery, weaving, astronomy and astrology, mathematics, weights and measures, philosophy, scriptural study, agriculture, navigation, trade and shipping, knowledge of time, logic, psychology and ayurveda. In modern times, two unique sets of 64 kalas have been developed, one for girls and one for boys. See: hereditary, Shilpa Shastra.

Kalamukha: (Sanskrit) "Black-faced"(probably for a black mark of renunciation worn on the forehead). A Saiva sect issued from Pashupata Saivism at its height (ca 600-1000). As no Kalamukha religious texts exist today, this sect is known only indirectly. They were said to be well organized in temple construction and worship, as well as eccentric and unsocial: eating from human skulls, smearing their bodies with ashes from the cremation ground, carrying a club, wearing matted hair, etc. See: left-handed, Pashupata Saivism, Tantrism.

kalasha: (Sanskrit) "Water pot; pitcher; jar." In temple rites, a pot of water, kalasha, topped with mango leaves and a husked coconut represents the Deity during special pujas. Kalasha also names the pot-like spires that adorn temple roofs.

Kali: (Sanskrit) "Black." Goddess. A form of Shakti in Her fierce aspect worshiped by various sects within Shaktism. She is dark, nude, primordial and fiercely powerful, as of a naked energy untamed. But from the perspective of devotees, She is the incomparable protectress, champion of sadhana and mother of liberation. The

Goddess Durga, seated on a tiger, has similar characteristics and is often identified with Kali. See: Shakti, Shaktism.

Kali Yuga: (Sanskrit) "Dark Age." The Kali Yuga is the last age in the repetitive cycle of four phases of time the universe passes through. It is comparable to the darkest part of the night, as the forces of ignorance are in full power and many of the subtle faculties of the soul are obscured. See: cosmic cycle, mahapralaya, yuga.

Kallata: (Sanskrit) An exponent of Kashmir Saivism (ca 875) who wrote the Spanda Karikas. Kallata was a disciple of Vasugupta. See: Kashmir Saivism.

kalpa: (Sanskrit) From krlip, "arranged, ordered." 1) Rules for ceremony or sacred living, as in the Kalpa Vedanga. 2) Determination or resolve, as in sankalpa. 3) A vast period of time also known as a day of Brahma, equaling 994 mahayugas, or 4,294,080,000 years. See: cosmic cycle, Kalpa Vedanga, sankalpa, yuga.

Kalpa Vedanga: (Sanskrit) "Procedural or ceremonial Veda-limb." Also known as the Kalpa Sutras--a body of three groups of auxiliary Vedic texts: 1) the Shrauta Sutras and Shulba Sutras, on public Vedic rites (yajna), 2) the Grihya Sutras (or Shastras), on domestic rites and social custom, and 3) the Dharma Shastras (or Sutras), on religious law. There are numerous sets of Kalpa Sutras, composed by various rishis. Each set is associated with one of the four Vedas. See: Dharma Shastra, Grihya Sutras, Shulba Shastras, Shrauta Sutras, Vedangas.

Kalyana: (Sanskrit) A town in Karnataka, South India.

kama: (Sanskrit) "Pleasure, love; desire." Cultural, intellectual and sexual fulfillment. One of four human goals, purushartha. See: Kama Sutras, purushartha.

kamandalu: (Sanskrit) "Vessel, water jar." Traditionally earthen or wooden, carried by sannyasins, it symbolizes the renunciate's simple, self-contained life. The tree from which kamandalus are traditionally made is the kamandalutaru. See: sannyasa dharma, sannyasin.

Kama Sutra(s): (Sanskrit) "Aphorisms on pleasure." A fifth-century text by Vatsyayana on erotics. The Kama Shutra and other Kama Shastras are sometimes classed as an Upaveda. See: Upaveda.

Kamika Agama: (Sanskrit) An important scripture among the 28 Saiva Siddhanta Agamas, widely available today. The verses from its kriya pada, on ritual and temple construction, are a crucial reference for South Indian priests. See: Saiva Agamas.

Kanada: (Sanskrit) Founder of the Vaisheshika Darshana, author of the Vaisheshika Sutras. See: shad darshana.

Kandar Anubhuti: (Tamil) A highly mystical 51-verse poem in praise of Lord Karttikeya-Murugan composed by the Tamil saint, Arunagirinathar (ca 1500). It describes the narrator's arduous path to Ultimate Reality.

Kannada: One of four modern Dravidian languages, and principal medium for Vira Saivism. It is spoken by 20 million people, mostly in Karnataka.

Kanphati: (Sanskrit) (Hindi.) "Split eared," from the custom of splitting the cartilage of the ear to insert large earrings. The name of the ascetic order of men and women founded by Gorakshanatha (ca 950), proponents of kundalini-hatha yoga still today. See: earrings, Gorakshanatha, Siddha Siddhanta.

Kapalika: (Sanskrit) An ascetic sect which developed out of the Pashupatas around 500 ce and largely vanished around 1400. They earned a reputation for extreme practices. Possible predecessors of Gorakshanatha Siddha Siddhanta yogis. See: Pashupata Saivism.

kapha: (Sanskrit) "Biological water." One of the three bodily humors, called dosha, kapha is known as the water humor. Principle of cohesion. Kapha gives bodily structure and stability, lubricates, heals and bestows immunity. See: ayurveda, dosha.

Kapila: (Sanskrit) Founder (ca 500 bce) of the Sankhya philosophy, one of the six darshanas of Hinduism. See: shad darshana.

Karana Agama: (Sanskrit) One of the 28 Saiva Siddhanta Agamas widely available today. Its kriya pada forms the basis for temple rituals performed in nearly all South Indian Siva temples. See: Saiva Agamas.

karana chitta: (Sanskrit) "Causal mind." The intuitive-superconscious mind of the soul. It corresponds to the anandamaya kosha, bliss sheath, also called karana sharira, causal body. See: kosha, mind (five states), soul.

Karana Hasuge: (Sanskrit) A central Vira Saiva scripture authored by Chennabasavanna. See: Chennabasavanna.

karana sharira: (Sanskrit) "Causal body," the actinic body or soul body. See: actinic, actinodic, kosha, odic, soul, subtle body.

Karavana Mahatmya: (Sanskrit) See: Pashupata Saivism.

karma: (Sanskrit) "Action, deed." One of the most important principles in Hindu thought, karma refers to 1) any act or deed; 2) the principle of cause and effect; 3) a consequence or "fruit of action" (karmaphala) or "after effect" (uttaraphala), which sooner or later returns upon the doer. What we sow, we shall reap in this or future

lives. Selfish, hateful acts (papakarma or kukarma) will bring suffering. Benevolent actions (punyakarma or sukarma) will bring loving reactions. Karma is a neutral, self-perpetuating law of the inner cosmos, much as gravity is an impersonal law of the outer cosmos. In fact, it has been said that gravity is a small, external expression of the greater law of karma. The impelling, unseen power of one's past actions is called adrishta.

- The law of karma acts impersonally, yet we may meaningfully interpret its results as either positive (punya) or negative (papa)--terms describing actions leading the soul either toward or away from the spiritual goal. Karma is further graded as: white (shukla), black (krishna), mixed (shukla-krishna) or neither white nor black (ashukla-akrishna). The latter term describes the karma of the jnani, who, as Rishi Patanjali says, is established in kaivalya, freedom from prakriti through realization of the Self. Similarly, one's karma must be in a condition of ashukla-akrishna, quiescent balance, in order for liberation to be attained. This equivalence of karma is called karmasamya, and is a factor that brings malaparipaka, or maturity of anava mala. It is this state of resolution in preparation for samadhi at death that all Hindus seek through making amends and settling differences.
- Karma is threefold: sanchita, prarabdha and kriyamana. --**sanchita karma:** "Accumulated actions." The sum of all karmas of this life and past lives. --**prarabdha karma:** "Actions begun; set in motion." That portion of sanchita karma that is bearing fruit and shaping the events and conditions of the current life, including the nature of one's bodies, personal tendencies and associations. --**kriyamana karma:** "Being made." The karma being created and added to sanchita in this life by one's thoughts, words and actions, or in the inner worlds between lives. Kriyamana karma is also called agami, "coming, arriving," and vartamana, "living, set in motion." While some kriyamana karmas bear fruit in the current life, others are stored for future births. Each of these types can be divided into two categories: arabdha (literally, "begun, undertaken;" karma that is "sprouting"), and anarabdha ("not commenced; dormant"), or "seed karma."
- In a famed analogy, karma is compared to rice in its various stages. Sanchita karma, the residue of one's total accumulated actions, is likened to rice that has been harvested and stored in a granary. From the stored rice, a small

portion has been removed, husked and readied for cooking and eating. This is prarabdha karma, past actions that are shaping the events of the present. Meanwhile, new rice, mainly from the most recent harvest of prarabdha karma, is being planted in the field that will yield a future crop and be added to the store of rice. This is kriyamana karma, the consequences of current actions.

- In Saivism, karma is one of three principal bonds of the soul, along with anava and maya. Karma is the driving force that brings the soul back again and again into human birth in the evolutionary cycle of transmigration called samsara. When all earthly karmas are resolved and the Self has been realized, the soul is liberated from rebirth. This is the goal of all Hindus.
- For each of the three kinds of karma there is a different method of resolution. Nonattachment to the fruits of action, along with daily rites of worship and strict adherence to the codes of dharma, stops the accumulation of kriyamana. Prarabdha karma is resolved only through being experienced and lived through. Sanchita karma, normally inaccessible, is burned away only through the grace and diksha of the satguru, who prescribes sadhana and tapas for the benefit of the shishya. Through the sustained kundalini heat of this extreme penance, the seeds of unsprouted karmas are fried, and therefore will never sprout in this or future lives. See: diksha, grace.
- Like the four-fold edict of dharma, the three-fold edict of karma has both individual and impersonal dimensions. Personal karma is thus influenced by broader contexts, sometimes known as family karma, community karma, national karma, global karma and universal karma. See: anava, fate, maya, moksha, papa, pasha, punya, sin, soul.

karmasamya: (Sanskrit) "Balance or equipoise of karma." See: karma.

karmashaya: (Sanskrit) "Holder of karma." Describes the body of the soul, or anandamaya kosha. See: karma, kosha.

karma yoga: (Sanskrit) "Union through action." The path of selfless service. See: yoga.

Karnataka: (Sanskrit) Southwest state of modern India, where Vijayanagara flourished. Vira Saivism is centered here. Population 25 million, area 74,043 square miles.

karnavedha: (Sanskrit) "Ear-piercing." See: samskaras of childhood.

Karttikeya: (Sanskrit) Child of the Pleiades, from Krittika, "Pleiades." Second son of Siva, the brother of Ganesha. A great Mahadeva worshiped in all parts of India and the world. Also known as Murugan, Kumara, Skanda, Shanmukhanatha, Subramanya and more, He is the God who guides that part of evolution which is religion, the transformation of the instinctive into a divine wisdom through the practice of yoga. He holds the holy vel of jnana shakti, which is His Power to vanquish darkness or ignorance.

Karttikeya Stotram: (Sanskrit) A subdivision (Rudrayamala Tantra) of the Shakta Tantras dedicated to God Karttikeya. See: Karttikeya.

karuna: (Sanskrit) "Compassionate; loving, full of grace."

Karuna Agama: (Sanskrit) One of the 28 Agamas of Saiva Siddhanta. See: Saiva Agamas.

Karunakarak Kadavul: (Tamil) Hymn by the Tamil saint, Tayumanavar (17051742), in praise of Lord Siva. See: Tayumanavar.

karunya: (Sanskrit) "Compassion, kindness, love." In Saivism, an alternate term for Siva's revealing grace, anugraha shakti. See: anugraha shakti, grace.

kashaya: (Sanskrit) "Brownish-red." The color of sannyasins' robes. See: kavi.

Kashmir (Kashmira): (Sanskrit) The Northernmost area of India, part of the present-day state of Jammu and Kashmir. It figures prominently in the history of Saivism. Area 115,000 square miles, under dispute between India and Pakistan. Population is six million in the Indian sector.

Kashmir Saivism: (Sanskrit) In this mildly theistic and intensely monistic school founded by Vasugupta around 850, Siva is immanent and transcendent. Purification and yoga are strongly emphasized. Kashmir Saivism provides an extremely rich and detailed understanding of the human psyche, and a clear and distinct path of kundalini-siddha yoga to the goal of Self Realization. The Kashmir Saivite is not so much concerned with worshiping a personal God as he is with attaining the transcendental state of Siva consciousness. Sadhana leads to the assimilation of the object (world) in the subject (I) until the Self (Siva) stands revealed as one with the universe. The goal--liberation--is sustained recognition (pratyabhijna) of one's true Self as nothing but Siva. There are three upaya, or stages of attainment of God

consciousness: anavopaya (yoga), shaktopaya (spiritual discrimination), shambhavopaya (attainment through the guru's instruction) and anupaya, or "no means" (spontaneous realization without effort). Kashmir Saivite literature is in three broad divisions: Agama Shastras, Spanda Shastras and Pratyabhijna Shastras. Today various organizations promulgate the esoteric teachings. While the number of Kashmir Saivite formal followers is uncertain, the school remains an important influence in India. See: Saivism, upaya.

katha: (Sanskrit) "Story; discussion." Also, the literary form involving the telling of stories. Kathakas are bards, storytellers. See: folk-narratives, mythology.

Katha Upanishad: (Sanskrit) One of the major Upanishads, belonging to the Taittiriya Brahmana of the Yajur Veda. This scripture contains the famous story of Nachiketas who extracts from Yama, Lord of Death, the knowledge of liberation to be had through realization of the Supreme.

Kathirgama Purana: (Sanskrit) A secondary scripture regarding the famous central Sri Lankan abode of Lord Murugan (Karttikeya).

Kaundinya: (Sanskrit) Author of a commentary on the Pashupata Sutras (ca 500). See: Pashupata Saivism, Pashupata Sutras.

Kaurusha: (Sanskrit) One of four known disciples of Lakulisha. See: Lakulisha, Pashupata Saivism.

Kaushitaki Upanishad: (Sanskrit) A major Upanishad belonging to the Rig Veda. It discusses: 1) the course of souls after death, 2) the doctrine of prana as related to the atman and 3) the attainment of moksha.

kavadi: (Tamil) A penance offered to Lord Murugan-Karttikeya, especially during Tai Pusam, consisting of carrying in procession a heavy, beautifully decorated, wooden object from which pots of milk hang which are to be used for His abhisheka. The penitent's tongue and other parts of the body are often pierced with small silver spears or hooks. See: penance.

kavi: (Tamil) "Ocher-saffron color." A Tamil term referring to the color taken on by robes of sadhus who sit, meditate or live on the banks of the Ganges. Names the color of the sannyasin's robes. The Sanskrit equivalent is kashaya.

Kayavarohana: (Sanskrit) Birthplace of Lakulisha, most prominent guru of Pashupata Saivism, in India's present-day state of Baroda. See: Lakulisha.

kaya siddhi: (Sanskrit) In Siddha Siddhanta, as well as Saiva Siddhanta and other yoga traditions, the process by which a yogi transforms his body from physical to spiritual substance to attain deathlessness. See: siddhi.

Kedaresvara Temple: (Sanskrit) A temple in Karnataka which belonged to the Kalamukha sect of Saivism. Inscriptions upon it (1162) are a main source of knowledge about this now nearly extinct sect. See: Kalamukha.

Kena Upanishad: (Sanskrit) Belongs to the Talavakara Brahmana of the Sama Veda. It is a discourse upon Brahman, Absolute Reality and His worship as personal God. See: Upanishad.

Kerala: (Sanskrit) The small Indian state, formerly called Konkan, along the southwestern tip of India. Area 15,000 square miles, population 25 million.

keshanta: (Sanskrit) "Beard-shaving." See: samskaras of adulthood.

kindred: Family, relatives, kin. See: joint family, extended family.

kirtana: (Sanskrit) "Praising." Devotional singing and dancing in celebration of God, Gods and guru. An important form of congregational worship in many Hindu sects. See: congregational worship, bhajana.

knower: One who knows. In philosophy, that within conscious beings which understands or is conscious. See: awareness, jnana, sakshin, chit.

konrai: (Tamil) The Golden Shower tree, Cassia fistula; symbol of Siva's cascading, abundant, golden grace.

Koran: The Islamic religion's sacred book, God's word transmitted through the angel Gabriel to Mohammed, the prophet of Islam. Its official version appeared around 650, 18 years after Mohammed's death. See: Mohammed.

kosha: (Sanskrit) "Sheath; vessel, container; layer." Philosophically, five sheaths through which the soul functions simultaneously in the various planes or levels of existence. They are sometimes compared to the layers of an onion. The koshas, in order of increasing subtlety, are as follows. --**annamaya kosha:** "Sheath composed of food." The physical or odic body, coarsest of sheaths in comparison to the faculties of the soul, yet indispensable for evolution and Self Realization, because only within it can all fourteen chakras fully function. See: chakra. --**pranamaya kosha:** "Sheath composed of prana (vital force)." Also known as the pranic or health body, or the etheric body or etheric double, it coexists within the physical body as its source of life, breath and vitality, and is its connection with the astral body. Prana moves in the pranamaya kosha as five primary currents or vayus, "vital airs or winds." Pranamaya kosha disintegrates at death along with the physical body. See: prana --**manomaya kosha:** "Mind-formed sheath." The lower astral body, from manas, "thought, will, wish." The instinctive-intellectual sheath of ordinary thought, desire and emotion. It is the seat of the indriyas, sensory and motor organs, respectively called jnanendriyas and karmendriyas. The manomaya kosha takes form as the physical body develops

and is discarded in the inner worlds before rebirth. It is understood in two layers: 1) the odic-causal sheath (buddhi) and 2) the odic-astral sheath (manas). See: indriya, manas. --**vijnanamaya kosha**: "Sheath of cognition." The mental or cognitive-intuitive sheath, also called the actinodic sheath. It is the vehicle of higher thought, vijnana--understanding, knowing, direct cognition, wisdom, intuition and creativity. --**anandamaya kosha**: "Body of bliss." The intuitive-superconscious sheath or actinic-causal body. This inmost soul form (svarupa) is the ultimate foundation of all life, intelligence and higher faculties. Its essence is Parashakti (Pure Consciousness) and Parasiva (the Absolute). Anandamaya kosha is not a sheath in the same sense as the four outer koshas. It is the soul itself, a body of light, also called karana sharira, causal body, and karmashaya, holder of karmas of this and all past lives. Karana chitta, "causal mind," names the soul's superconscious mind, of which Parashakti (or Satchidananda) is the rarified substratum. Anandamaya kosha is that which evolves through all incarnations and beyond until the soul's ultimate, fulfilled merger, vishvagrasi, in the Primal Soul, Parameshvara. Then anandamaya kosha becomes Sivamayakosha, the body of God Siva.

- The physical body (annamaya kosha) is also called sthula sharira, "gross body." The soul body (anandamaya kosha) is also called karana sharira, "causal body." The pranamaya, manomaya and vijnanamaya koshas together comprise the sukshma sharira, "subtle body," with the pranamaya shell disintegrating at death. See: actinic, actinodic, manomaya kosha, niyati, odic, sharira, soul, subtle body.

Krishna: (Sanskrit) "Black." Also related to krishtih, meaning "drawing, attracting." One of the most popular Gods of the Hindu pantheon. He is worshiped by Vaishnavas as the eighth avatara, incarnation, of Vishnu. He is best known as the Supreme Personage depicted in the Mahabharata, and specifically in the Bhagavad Gita. For Gaudiya Vaishnavism, Krishna is the Godhead.

Krittika Dipa: (Sanskrit) A joyous one-day festival on the Krittika nakshatra (Pleiades constellation), in November-December, when God Siva is worshiped as an infinite pillar of light. Great bonfires are lit at night on hills and in villages in India and elsewhere to represent the divine, all-permeating light of Parashakti. See: festival.

kriya: (Sanskrit) "Action." In a general sense, kriya can refer to doing of any kind. Specifically, it names religious action, especially rites or ceremonies. In yoga terminology, kriya names involuntary physical movements caused by the arousal of the kundalini. See: pada.

Kriyakramadyotika: (Sanskrit) A manual by Aghorasiva (ca 1050) detailing Agamic Saiva ritual. It is used widely by South Indian priests today.

kriyamana karma: (Sanskrit) "Actions being made." See: karma.

kriya pada: (Sanskrit) "Stage of religious action; worship." The stage of worship and devotion, second of four progressive stages of maturation on the Saiva Siddhanta path of attainment. See: pada.

kriya shakti: (Sanskrit) "Action power." The universal force of doing. See: Shakti, trishula.

kshama: (Sanskrit) "Patience." See: yama-niyama.

kshatriya: (Sanskrit) "Governing; sovereign." The social class of lawmakers, law-enforcers and the military. See: varna dharma.

Kudala Sangamadeva: (Sanskrit) A name of Siva meaning "Lord of rivers' confluence."

kula: (Sanskrit) "Family; home; group of families." See: extended family, joint family.

kula guru: (Sanskrit) The spiritual preceptor of the family or extended family.

Kularnava Tantra: (Sanskrit) A leading scripture of the Kaula school of Shaktism. It comprises 17 chapters totaling 2,058 verses which focus on ways to liberation, with notable chapters on the guru-shishya relationship.

Kumara: (Sanskrit) "Virgin youth; ever-youthful." A name of Lord Karttikeya as a perpetual bachelor. See: Karttikeya.

kumbha: (Sanskrit) "Jar or pot;" "water vessel."

kundalini: (Sanskrit) "She who is coiled; serpent power." The primordial cosmic energy in every individual which, at first, lies coiled like a serpent at the base of the spine and eventually, through the practice of yoga, rises up the sushumna nadi. As it rises, the kundalini awakens each successive chakra. Nirvikalpa samadhi, enlightenment, comes as it pierces through the door of Brahman at the core of the sahasrara and enters! Kundalini shakti then returns to rest in any one of the seven chakras. Sivasayujya is complete when the kundalini arrives back in the sahasrara and remains coiled in this crown chakra. See: chakra, door of Brahman, samadhi, nadi, tantrism.

kunkuma: (Sanskrit) "Saffron; red." The red powder, made of turmeric and lime, worn by Hindus as the pottu, dot, at the point of the third eye on the forehead. Names the saffron plant, *Crocus sativus*, and its pollen.

Kurma Purana: (Sanskrit) "Tortoise story." One of the six Siva Puranas, it glorifies the worship of Siva and Durga.

Kurukshetra: (Sanskrit) An extensive plain near Delhi, scene of the great war between the Kauravas and Pandavas. See: Mahabharata, Bhagavad Gita.

Kushika: (Sanskrit) One of four known disciples of Lakulisha.

kuttuvilaku: (Tamil) A standing lamp found in the temple, shrine room or home. It is made of metal, with several wicks fed by ghee or special oils. Used to light the home and used in puja. Part of temple and shrine altars, the standing lamp is sometimes worshiped as the divine light, Parashakti or Parajyoti. Returning from the temple and lighting one's kuttuvilaku courts the accompanying devas to remain in the home and channels the vibration of the temple sanctum sanctorum into the home shrine. Called dipastambha in Sanskrit.

kutumba: (Sanskrit) "Joint family." See: extended family, joint family.

L

Lakshmi: (Sanskrit) "Mark or sign," often of success or prosperity. Shakti, the Universal Mother, as Goddess of wealth. The mythological consort of Vishnu. Usually depicted on a lotus flower. Prayers are offered to Lakshmi for wealth, beauty and peace. See: Goddess, Shakti.

Lakulisha: (Sanskrit) The most prominent guru (ca 200) of the ancient Pashupata school of Saivism. The Pashupata Sutras are attributed to him. See: Saivism.

Lalla: (Lalasa (Sanskrit) in Sanskrit.) (Sanskrit) A woman Kashmir Saivite saint (ca 1300) whose intensely mystical poems, Lalla Vakyanis, describe her inner experiences of oneness with Siva. See: Kashmir Saivism.

lance: A spear. See: vel, Karttikeya.

larder: Pantry; room in a house where food supplies are kept.

laud: To praise. To sing, chant or speak the qualities or glories of.

lavish: Very abundant or generous in giving or spending.

left-handed: Vama marga. A term describing certain tantric practices where the instincts and intellect are transcended, and detachment is sought through practices and behavior contrary to orthodox social norms. See: tantra, tantrika, tantrism.

legend: A story of uncertain historical basis, transmitted from generation to generation. See: folk narratives, katha, mythology.

legislate: To make or pass laws.

legitimate: According to the rules or the law. Authentic; reasonable.

lekharpartha havana: (Sanskrit) "Written-prayer-burning rite." A coined term for the ancient practice of sending written prayers to the Gods by burning them in a sanctified fire in a temple or shrine. Alternately this rite can be performed at other appropriate sites, with four persons sitting around a fire and chanting to create a temporary temple. Prayers can be written in any language, but should be clearly legible, in black ink on white paper. The devas have provided a special script, called Tyaf, especially for this purpose.

lest: For fear that a thing might happen.

liberal Hinduism: A synonym for Smartism and the closely related neo-Indian religion. See: neo-Indian religion, Smartism, universalist.

liberation: Moksha, release from the bonds of pasha, after which the soul is liberated from samsara (the round of births and deaths). In Saiva Siddhanta, pasha is the three-fold bondage of anava, karma and maya, which limit and confine the soul to the reincarnational cycle so that it may evolve. Moksha is freedom from the fettering power of these bonds, which do not cease to exist, but no longer have the power to fetter or bind the soul. See: mala, jivanmukti, moksha, pasha, reincarnation, satguru, Self Realization, soul.

licentious: Morally unrestrained, especially in sexual behavior.

light: In an ordinary sense, a form of energy which makes physical objects visible to the eye. In a religious-mystical sense, light also illumines inner objects (i.e., mental images). --**inner light:** light perceived inside the head and body, of which there are varying intensities. When the karmas have been sufficiently quieted, the meditator can see and enjoy inner light independently of mental images. --**moon-like inner light:** Inner light perceived at a first level of intensity, glowing softly, much like the moon. The meditator's first experience of it is an important milestone in unfoldment. --**clear white light:** Inner light at a high level of intensity, very clear and pure. When experienced fully, it is seen to be permeating all of existence, the universal substance of all form, inner and outer, pure consciousness, Satchidananda. This experience, repeated at regular intervals, can yield "a knowing greater than you could acquire at any university or institute of higher learning." See: Siva consciousness, tattva.

Linga: (Sanskrit) "Mark." See: Sivalinga, svayambhu Linga.

Lingachara: (Sanskrit) Daily worship of the Sivalinga. One of the five essential codes of conduct for Vira Saivites. See: Panchachara, Vira Saivism.

Linga Diksha: (Sanskrit) The Vira Saiva initiation ceremony in which the guru ties a small Sivalinga (Ishtalinga) around the neck of the devotee and enjoins him-her to worship it twice daily. This initiation replaces the sacred thread ceremony, upanayana. See: Vira Saivism.

Linga Purana: (Sanskrit) One of the six principal Siva Puranas. This text explains the purusharthas (the four goals of life) and the significance of Sivalinga worship. See: Purana.

Lingashtakam: (Sanskrit) A short hymn of eight verses in praise of the Sivalinga.

Lingavanta: (Sanskrit) "Wearer of the Linga." (Hindi: Lingayat.) Alternate term for Vira Saivite. See: Vira Saivism.

liturgy: The proper, prescribed forms of ritual.

livelihood: Subsistence, or the means of obtaining it. One's profession, trade or employment. See: dharma, caste.

loka: (Sanskrit) "World, habitat, realm, or plane of existence." From loc, "to shine, be bright, visible." A dimension of manifest existence; cosmic region. Each loka reflects or involves a particular range of consciousness. The three primary lokas are 1) --**Bhuloka:** "Earth world." The world perceived through the five senses, also called the gross plane, as it is the most dense of the worlds. 2) --**Antarloka:** "Inner or in-between world." Known in English as the subtle or astral plane, the intermediate dimension between the physical and causal worlds, where souls in their astral bodies sojourn between incarnations and when they sleep. 3) --**Sivaloka:** "World of Siva," and of the Gods and highly evolved souls. The causal plane, also called Karanaloka, existing deep within the Antarloka at a higher level of vibration, it is a world of superconsciousness and extremely refined energy. It is the plane of creativity and intuition, the quantum level of the universe, where souls exist in self-effulgent bodies made of actinic particles of light. It is here that God and Gods move and lovingly guide the evolution of all the worlds and shed their ever-flowing grace. Its vibratory rate is that of the vishuddha, ajna and sahasrara chakras and those above. From the perspective of the seven worlds, the Sivaloka is of three levels: Janaloka, "creative plane" (vishuddha chakra); Tapoloka, "plane of austerity" (ajna chakra); and Satyaloka, "plane of reality" (sahasrara chakra); also called Brahmaloaka.

- The Antarloka and Sivaloka are the ever-present substratum of physical existence, most frequently experienced by humans during sleep and deep meditation. Each loka is a microcosm of the next higher world, which is its macrocosm, e.g., the physical plane is a microcosm (a smaller and less-refined version) of the Antarloka. See: three worlds.

lotus asana: The most famous of hatha yoga poses and the optimum position for meditation. It is known as the padmasana (lotus pose), as the legs are crossed, turning the soles of the feet up, which then resemble a lotus flower. See: asana, hatha yoga.

lute: A stringed instrument of highly pleasant sound.

M

macrocosm: "Great world or universe." See: microcosm-macrocosm, pinda, three worlds.

Madhumateya: (Sanskrit) A Saiva Siddhanta monastic order founded by Pavanasiva, preceptor of the Kalachuri kings of Central India.

Madhva: (Sanskrit) South Indian Vaishnava saint (1197-1278) who expounded a purely dualistic (pluralistic) Vedanta in which there is an essential and eternal distinction between God, soul and world, and between all beings and things. He is also one of the few Hindus to have taught the existence of an eternal hell where lost souls would be condemned to suffer forever. See: dvaita-advaita, Vedanta.

maha: (Sanskrit) An adjective or prefix meaning "great."

Mahabharata: (Sanskrit) "Great Epic of India." The world's longest epic poem. It revolves around the conflict between two royal families, the Pandavas and Kauravas, and their great battle of Kurukshetra near modern Delhi in approximately 1424 bce. Woven through the plot are countless discourses on philosophy, religion, astronomy, cosmology, polity, economics and many stories illustrative of simple truths and ethical principles. The Bhagavad Gita is one section of the work. The Mahabharata is revered as scripture by Vaishnavites and Smartas. See: Bhagavad Gita, Itihasa.

Mahadeva: (Sanskrit) "Great shining one; God." Referring either to God Siva or any of the highly evolved beings who live in the Sivaloka in their natural, effulgent soul bodies. God Siva in His perfection as Primal Soul is one of the Mahadevas, yet He is unique and incomparable in that He alone is uncreated, the Father-Mother and Destiny of all other Mahadevas. He is called Parameshvara, "Supreme God." He is the Primal Soul, whereas the other Gods are individual souls. It is said in scripture that there are 330 million Gods. See: Gods, monotheism, Parameshvara, Siva.

Mahadeva Mountain: (Sanskrit) See: Vasugupta.

Mahakala: (Sanskrit) "Great time," or "dissolver of time." One of the names and forms of Siva. Mahakala is Time beyond time, who devours all things and forms and, by so doing, helps the soul transcend all dualities. Mystically, time devours itself and thus the timeless state is achieved. See: tattva.

mahakutumba: (Sanskrit) "Great or extended family." See: extended family.

mahamandapa: (Sanskrit) "Great hall." Main, outer assembly hall in the temple where devotees gather for ceremony. See: mandapa, temple.

Mahanarayana Upanishad: (Sanskrit) A philosophical text of the Krishna Yajur Veda.

Mahanirvana Tantra: (Sanskrit) "Treatise on the great emancipation." An 11th-century advaita scripture dealing with mantra and esoteric rituals.

mahapralaya: (Sanskrit) "Great dissolution." Total annihilation of the universe at the end of a mahakalpa. It is the absorption of all existence, including time, space and individual consciousness, all the lokas and their inhabitants into God Siva, as the water of a river returns to its source, the sea. Then Siva alone exists in His three perfections, until He again issues forth creation. During this incredibly vast period there are many partial dissolutions, pralayas, when either the Bhuloka or the Bhuloka and the Antarloka are destroyed. See: cosmic cycle, pralaya.

mahaprasthanas: (Sanskrit) "Great departure." Death. See: death, transition.

maharaja: (Sanskrit) "Great king." Indian monarch. Title of respect for political or (in modern times) spiritual leaders.

Maharashtra: (Sanskrit) Central state of modern India whose capital is Mumbai. Area 118,717 square miles, population 63 million.

maharishi (maharshi): (Sanskrit) "Great seer." Title for the greatest and most influential of siddhas.

Maharloka: (Sanskrit) "Plane of greatness." From mahas, "greatness, might, power, glory." Also called the Devaloka, this fourth highest of the seven upper worlds is the mental plane, realm of anahata chakra. See: loka.

mahasakara-pinda: (Sanskrit) "Great manifest body." In Siddha Siddhanta Saivism, the first manifestation of Siva out of the transcendent state. From it all of existence issues forth. See: pinda.

mahasamadhi: (Sanskrit) "Great ecstasy." The death, or dropping off of the physical body, of a great soul, an event occasioned by tremendous blessings. Also names the shrine in which the remains of a great soul are entombed.
mahasamadhi day: Anniversary of the transition of a great soul. See: cremation, death, reincarnation, samadhi, transition.

Mahasivaratri: (Sanskrit) "Siva's great night." Saivism's foremost festival, celebrated on the night before the new moon in February-March. Fasting and an all-night vigil are observed as well as other disciplines: chanting, praying, meditating and worshiping Siva as the Source and Self of all that exists. See: festival.

mahatala: (Sanskrit) "Vast netherworld." The sixth lowest astral world. Region of consciencelessness. See: chakra.

mahatma: (Sanskrit) "Great soul." Honorific title given to people held in high esteem, especially saints. See: atman.

mahavakya: (Sanskrit) "Great saying." A profound aphorism from scripture or a holy person. Most famous are four Upanishadic proclamations: Prajanam Brahma ("Pure consciousness is God"--Aitareya U.), Aham Brahmasmi ("I am God"--Brihadaranyaka U.), Tat tvam asi ("Thou art That"--Chandogya U.) and Ayam atma Brahma ("The soul is God"--Mandukya U.).

mahesha: (Sanskrit) "Great God." Term used by Vira Saivites to mean charity, seeing all as God. See: shatsthala.

Maheshvara: (Sanskrit) "Great Lord." In Saiva Siddhanta, the name of Siva's energy of veiling grace, one of five aspects of Parameshvara, the Primal Soul. Maheshvara is also a popular name for Lord Siva as Primal Soul and personal Lord. See: Cosmic Dance, Nataraja, Parameshvara.

Maitreya: (Sanskrit) One of four known disciples of Lakulisha. See: Pashupata Saivism.

Maitri Upanishad: (Sanskrit) Belongs to the Maitrayaniya branch of the Krishna Yajur Veda. A later Upanishad covering Aum, outer nature, the Self, control of the mind, etc.

mala: (Sanskrit) "Impurity." An important term in Saivism referring to three bonds, called pasha--anava, karma, and maya--which limit the soul, preventing it from knowing its true, divine nature. See: liberation, pasha.

mala: (Sanskrit) "Garland." A strand of beads for holy recitation, japa, usually made of rudraksha, tulasi, sandalwood or crystal. Also a flower garland.

malaparipaka: (Sanskrit) "Maturing of the malas." See: anava, karma, mala.

Malati-Madhava: (Sanskrit) A Sanskrit play by Bhavabhuti (ca 500). Primarily a love story, it contains incidental descriptions of the Kapalika Saivite sect of ascetics.

malice: Ill will; desire or intent to do harm to another, generally without conscience. See: mahatala.

manana: (Sanskrit) "Thinking; deep reflection." See: self-reflection.

manas: (Sanskrit) "Mind; understanding." The lower or instinctive mind, seat of desire and governor of sensory and motor organs, called indriyas. Manas is termed the undisciplined, empirical mind. Manas is characterized by desire, determination, doubt, faith, lack of faith, steadfastness, lack of steadfastness, shame, intellection and fear. It is a faculty of manomaya kosha, the lower astral or instinctive-intellectual sheath. See: awareness, indriya, instinctive mind, manomaya kosha, mind (individual).

manas chitta: (Sanskrit) "Instinctive mind." See: manas, manomaya kosha, instinctive mind.

mandala: (Sanskrit) "Circular; orb; mystic diagram." A circle. Name of the chapters of the Rig Veda Samhita. A circular diagram without beginning or end--which indicates the higher and the lower and other possibilities--upon which one meditates. A tapestry, picture or grouping of words used in meditation to enter the realms depicted.

mandapa: (Sanskrit) From mand, "to deck, adorn." Temple precinct; a temple compound, open hall or chamber. In entering a large temple, one passes through a series of mandapas, each named according to its position, e.g., mukhamandapa, "front chamber." In some temples, mandapas are concentrically arranged. See: mahamandapa, temple.

mandira: (Sanskrit) "Abode." A temple or shrine; sanctuary. See: devamandira, temple.

Mandukya Upanishad: (Sanskrit) A "principal" Upanishad (belonging to the Atharva Veda) which, in 12 concise verses, teaches of Aum and the four states (avastha) of awareness: waking (vishva), dreaming (taijasa), dreamless sleep (prajna) and transcendent, spiritual consciousness (turiya).

mangala kriya: (Sanskrit) "Auspicious action or practice." Hindu culture.

Mangalavede: (Sanskrit) A town in Karnataka, South India.

manifest: To show or reveal. Perceivable or knowable, therefore having form. The opposite of unmanifest or transcendent. See: formless, tattva.

manifold: Varied. Having many forms, aspects, parts.

Manikkavasagar: (Tamil) He of ruby-like utterances." Tamil saint who contributed to the medieval Saivite renaissance (ca 850). He gave up his position as prime minister to follow a renunciate life. His poetic Tiruvasagam, "Holy Utterances"--a major Saiva Siddhanta scripture (part of the eighth Tirumurai) and a

jewel of Tamil literature--express his aspirations, trials and yogic realizations. See: Nalvar, Tirumurai.

manipura chakra: (Sanskrit) "Wheeled city of jewels." Solar-plexus center of willpower. See: chakra.

mankolam: (Tamil) "Mango design." The paisley, a stylized image of the mango, symbol of auspiciousness, associated with Lord Ganesha.

manomaya kosha: (Sanskrit) "Mind-made sheath." The instinctive-intellectual aspect of the soul's subtle body (sukshma sharira), also called the odic-astral sheath. It is the sheath of ordinary thought, desire and emotion. The manomaya kosha is made up of odic prana and is almost an exact duplicate of the physical body. However, changes that appear upon the physical body, such as aging, first occur within the structure of this sheath of the astral body. This is the sheath of the subconscious mind; it can be easily disturbed and is sometimes called the emotional body. See: astral body, instinctive mind, kosha, odic, soul, subtle body, vasana.

mansahara: (Sanskrit) "Meat-eating." (Sanskrit) **mansahari:** (Sanskrit) "Meat-eater." Those who follow a non-vegetarian diet. See: meat-eater, vegetarian.

mantra: (Sanskrit) "Mystic formula." A sound, syllable, word or phrase endowed with special power, usually drawn from scripture. Mantras are chanted loudly during puja to invoke the Gods and establish a force field. Certain mantras are repeated softly or mentally for japa, the subtle tones quieting the mind, harmonizing the inner bodies and stimulating latent spiritual qualities. Hinduism's universal mantra is Aum. To be truly effective, such mantras must be given by the preceptor through initiation. See: Aum, incantation, japa, puja, yajna.

Mantra Gopya: (Sanskrit) The collected writings of Allama Prabhu. See: Allama Prabhu.

Manu Dharma Shastra: (Sanskrit) "Sage Manu's law book." An encyclopedic treatise of 2,685 verses on Hindu law assembled as early as 600 bce. Among its major features are the support of varna dharma, ashrama dharma, stri dharma and seeing the Self in all beings. Despite its caste-based restrictions, which determine one's life unrelentingly from birth to death, it remains the source of much of modern Hindu culture and law. These "Laws of Manu" are the oldest and considered the most authoritative of the greater body of Dharma Shastras. Even during the time of the British Raj in India, law was largely based on these texts. The text is widely available today in several languages. (Buhler's English translation is over 500 pages.) See: caste, dharma, Dharma Shastras, Kalpa Vedanga.

marga: (Sanskrit) "Path; way." From marg, "to seek." See: pada.

marital: Having to do with marriage. See: grihastha, griheshvara and grihani.

Mariyamman: (Tamil) "Smallpox Goddess," protectress from plagues. See: Amman, Shakti, Shaktism.

marriage covenant: The written (or verbal) statements of bride and groom expressing the promises and expectations of their marriage. Known in Sanskrit as vannishchaya, "settlement by word."

Matanga Parameshvara Agama: (Sanskrit) Among the 28 Saiva Siddhanta Agamas, containing 3,500 verses, deals at length with the categories of existence (tattvas). The Angkor Wat temple in Cambodia is thought to have been built using the temple section of this scripture. See: Saiva Agamas.

material cause: Upadana karana. The substance of creation, maya, Siva's "mirific energy." In Saivism, material cause, maya, is threefold: shuddha ("pure") maya, shuddhashuddha ("pure-impure") maya and ashuddha ("impure") maya. Shuddha maya, or bindu, is the material cause of the causal plane. Shuddhashuddha maya is the material cause of the subtle plane. Ashuddhamaya (or Prakriti) is the material cause of the gross plane. See: cause, maya, tattva.

materialism (materialistic): The doctrine that matter is the only reality, that all life, thought and feelings are but the effects of movements of matter, and that there exist no worlds but the physical. Materialists usually hold that there is no God--a cosmic, material, prime mover perhaps, but no personal God. An Indian school of thought which propounded this view was the Charvaka. See: atheism, Charvaka, nastika, worldly.

mati: (Sanskrit) "Cognition, understanding; conviction." See: yama-niyama.

matrimonial: Related to marriage.

Matsyendranatha: (Sanskrit) A patron saint of Nepal, guru of Gorakshanatha and a mystic in the Natha tradition (ca 900). Some consider him to have been the foremost human teacher of hatha yoga. See: hatha yoga.

Mattamayura Order: (Sanskrit) A Saiva Siddhanta monastic order founded by Purandara (successor to Rudrashambhu), centered in the Punjab. Members of this order served as advisors to the king.

matter: Substance, especially of the physical world. May also refer to all of manifest existence, including the subtle, nonphysical dimensions. See: maya.

mature: Ripe; fully grown or developed.

maya: (Sanskrit) "Consisting of; made of," as in manomaya, "made of mind."

maya: (Sanskrit) From the verb root ma, "to measure, to limit, give form." The principle of appearance or manifestation of God's power or "mirific energy," "that which measures." The substance emanated from Siva through which the world of form is manifested. Hence all creation is also termed maya. It is the cosmic creative force, the principle of manifestation, ever in the process of creation, preservation and dissolution. See: loka, mind (universal), mirific. The Upanishads underscore maya's captivating nature, which blinds souls to the transcendent Truth. In Shankara's Vedantic interpretation, maya is taken as pure illusion or unreality. In Saivism it is one of the three bonds (pasha) that limit the soul and thereby facilitate its evolution. For Saivites and most other nondualists, it is understood not as illusion but as relative reality, in contrast to the unchanging Absolute Reality. In the Saiva Siddhanta system, there are three main divisions of maya, the pure, the pure-impure and the impure realms. Pure or shuddha maya consists of the first five tattvas--Siva tattva, Shakti tattva, Sadasiva tattva, Ishvara tattva and Shuddhavidya tattva. The pure-impure realm consists of the next seven tattvas. The impure realm consists of the maya tattva and all of its evolutes--from the kala tattva to prithivi, the element earth. Thus, in relation to the physical universe, maya is the principle of ever-changing matter. In Vaishnavism, maya is one of the nine Shaktis of Vishnu. See: loka, mind (universal), mirific, tattva, world.

mayura: (Sanskrit) "Peacock." The vahana, or mount, of Lord Karttikeya, symbolizing effulgent beauty and religion in full glory. The peacock is able to control powerful snakes, such as the cobra, symbolizing the soulful domination of the instinctive elements--or control of the kundalini, which is yoga. See: Karttikeya, vahana.

mean: As a verb: "to signify." As an adjective: base, low-minded; selfish.

meat-eater: Mansahari. Those who follow a nonvegetarian diet. They are described in the following passage from the obscure Mansahara Parihasajalpita Stotram. "Those who eat the flesh of other creatures are nothing less than gristle-grinders, blood-drinkers, muscle-munchers, sinew-chewers, carcass-crunchers, flesh-feeders--those who make their throat a garbage pit and their stomach a graveyard--mean, angry, loathsomely jealous, confused and beset by covetousness, who without restraint would lie, deceive, kill or steal to solve immediate problems. They are flesh-feeders, loathsome to the Gods, but friendly to the asuras, who become their Gods and Goddesses, the blood-sucking monsters who inhabit Naraka and deceptively have it decorated to look like the pitriloka, the world of the fathers. To such beings the deluded meat-eaters pay homage and prostrate while munching the succulent flesh off bones." See: vegetarianism.

mediatrix: A go-between, intermediary or reconciler between two parties. The feminine form of the term mediator.

meditation: Dhyana. Sustained concentration. Meditation describes a quiet, alert, powerfully concentrated state wherein new knowledge and insights are awakened from within as awareness focuses one-pointedly on an object or specific line of thought. See: internalized worship, raja yoga, Satchidananda.

mediumship: Act or practice of serving as a channel through which beings of inner worlds communicate with humans. See: folk-shamanic, trance.

mendicant: A beggar; a wandering monk, or sadhu, who lives on alms.

menses: A woman's monthly menstruation period, during which, by Hindu tradition, she rests from her usual activities and forgoes public and family religious functions.

mental body (sheath): The higher-mind layer of the subtle or astral body in which the soul functions in Maharloka of the Antarloka or subtle plane. In Sanskrit, the mental body is vijnanamaya kosha, "sheath of cognition." See: intellectual mind, kosha, subtle body.

mental plane: Names the refined strata of the subtle world. It is called Maharloka or Devaloka, realm of anahata chakra. Here the soul is shrouded in the mental or cognitive sheath, called vijnanamaya kosha.

merge: To lose distinctness or identity by being absorbed. To unite or become one with.

merger of the soul: See: evolution of the soul, vishvagrassa.

meritorious: Having merit, deserving of praise or reward. See: punya.

mesmerizing: Hypnotizing; spell-binding; fascinating.

metamorphosis: Complete transformation, as in a caterpillar's becoming a butterfly. See: kundalini, reincarnation.

metaphysics: 1) The branch of philosophy dealing with first causes and nature of reality. 2) The science of mysticism. See: darshana, mysticism.

Meykandar: (Tamil) "Truth seer." The 13th-century Tamil theologian, author (or translator from the Raurava Agama) of the Sivajnanabodham. Founder of the Meykandar Sampradaya of pluralistic Saiva Siddhanta. See: Saiva Siddhanta, Sivajnanabodham.

Meykandar Shastras: Fourteen Tamil works on Saiva Siddhanta written during the 13th and 14th centuries by seven authors--Meykandar, Arulnandi, Uyyavanda

Deva I and II, Umapati, Sivajnana Yogin and Manavasagam Kadandar. See: Saiva Siddhanta, Sivajnanabodham.

microcosm-macrocosm: "Little world" or "miniature universe" as compared with "great world." Microcosm refers to the internal source of something larger or more external (macrocosm). In Hindu cosmology, the outer world is a macrocosm of the inner world, which is its microcosm and is mystically larger and more complex than the physical universe and functions at a higher rate of vibration and even a different rate of time. The microcosm precedes the macrocosm. Thus, the guiding principle of the Bhuloka comes from the Antarloka and Sivaloka. Consciousness precedes physical form. In the tantric tradition, the body of man is viewed as a microcosm of the entire divine creation. "Microcosm-macrocosm" is embodied in the terms pinda and anda. See: apex of creation, pinda, quantum, tattva, tantra.

milestone: An event which serves as a significant marker in the progress of a project, history, etc.

milieu: Environment; social or cultural setting.

millennium: A period of 1,000 years. **millennia:** Plural of millenium.

Mimamsa: (Sanskrit) "Inquiry." See: shad darshana.

mind (five states): A view of the mind in five parts. --**conscious mind:** Jagrat chitta ("wakeful consciousness"). The ordinary, waking, thinking state of mind in which the majority of people function most of the day. --**subconscious mind:** Samskara chitta ("impression mind"). The part of mind "beneath" the conscious mind, the storehouse or recorder of all experience (whether remembered consciously or not)--the holder of past impressions, reactions and desires. Also, the seat of involuntary physiological processes. --**subsubconscious mind:** Vasana chitta ("mind of subliminal traits"). The area of the subconscious mind formed when two thoughts or experiences of the same rate of intensity are sent into the subconscious at different times and, intermingling, give rise to a new and totally different rate of vibration. This subconscious formation later causes the external mind to react to situations according to these accumulated vibrations, be they positive, negative or mixed. --**superconscious mind:** Karana chitta. The mind of light, the all-knowing intelligence of the soul. The psychological term is turiya, "the fourth," meaning the condition beyond the states of wakefulness (jagrat), "dream" (svapna), and "deep sleep" (sushupti). At its deepest level, the superconscious is Parashakti, or Satchidananda, the Divine Mind of God Siva. In Sanskrit, there are numerous terms for the various levels and states of superconsciousness. Specific superconscious states such as: vishvachaitanya ("universal consciousness"), advaita chaitanya ("nondual consciousness"), adhyatma chetana ("spiritual consciousness"). --**subsuperconscious mind:** Anukarana chitta. The superconscious mind working

through the conscious and subconscious states, which brings forth intuition, clarity and insight. See: chitta, consciousness, samskara, Satchidananda, vasana.

mind (individual): At the microcosmic level of individual souls, mind is consciousness and its faculties of memory, desire, thought and cognition. Individual mind is chitta (mind, consciousness) and its three-fold expression is called antahkarana, "inner faculty" composed of: 1) buddhi ("intellect, reason, logic," higher mind); 2) ahamkara ("I-maker," egoity); 3) manas ("lower mind," instinctive-intellectual mind, the seat of desire). From the perspective of the 36 tattvas (categories of existence), each of these is a tattva which evolves out of the one before it. Thus, from buddhi comes ahamkara and then manas. Manas, buddhi and ahamkara are faculties of the manomaya kosha (astral or instinctive-intellectual sheath). Anukarana chitta, subsuperconsciousness, the knowing mind, is the mind-state of the vijnanamaya kosha (mental or intuitive-cognitive sheath). The aspect of mind corresponding directly to the anandamaya kosha (causal body) is karana chitta, superconsciousness. See: ahamkara, antahkarana, buddhi, chitta, manas, mind (universal).

mind (three phases): A perspective of mind as instinctive, intellectual and superconscious. --**instinctive mind.** Manas chitta, the seat of desire and governor of sensory and motor organs. --**intellectual mind.** Buddhi chitta, the faculty of thought and intelligence. --**superconscious mind:** Karana chitta, the strata of intuition, benevolence and spiritual sustenance. Its most refined essence is Parasakti, or Satchidananda, all-knowing, omnipresent consciousness, the One transcendental, self-luminous, divine mind common to all souls. See: awareness, consciousness, mind (five states).

mind (universal): In the most profound sense, mind is the sum of all things, all energies and manifestations, all forms, subtle and gross, sacred and mundane. It is the inner and outer cosmos. Mind is maya. It is the material matrix. It is everything but That, the Self within, Parasiva, which is timeless, formless, causeless, spaceless, known by the knower only after Self Realization. The Self is the indescribable, unnameable, Ultimate Reality. Mind in its subtlest form is undifferentiated Pure Consciousness, primal substance (called Parashakti or Satchidananda), out of which emerge the myriad forms of existence, both psychic and material. See: chitta, consciousness, maya, tattva, world.

minister: Someone charged with a specific function on behalf of a religious or political body, especially in serving the spiritual needs of the people. In Hinduism, this term may be applied to temple priests, monks, preceptors, scriptural scholars and others.

minutiae: Small or relatively unimportant details.

Mirabai: (Sanskrit) A Vaishnava saint (ca 1420), poetess and mystic, said to be a Rajput princess who abandoned the world in total surrender to Lord Krishna. Her life story and songs are popular today, especially in Gujarat.

mirific: "Wonder-making; magical; astonishing." See: maya, material cause.

misconception: A wrong idea or concept; misunderstanding, avidya. See: avidya, illusion.

mitahara: (Sanskrit) "Measured eating; moderate appetite." A requisite to good health and an essential for success in yoga. The ideal portion per meal is described as no more than would fill the two hands held side by side and slightly cupped piled high, an amount called a kudava. All the six tastes should be within these foods (sweet, salty, sour, pungent, bitter and astringent), and the foods should be well cooked and highly nutritious. See: yama-niyama.

modaka: (Sanskrit) "Sweets." A round lemon-sized sweet made of rice, coconut, sugar, etc. It is a favorite treat of Ganesha. Esoterically, it corresponds to siddhi (attainment or fulfillment), the gladdening contentment of pure joy, the sweetest of all things sweet. See: Ganesha.

moksha: (Sanskrit) "Liberation." Release from transmigration, samsara, the round of births and deaths, which occurs after karma has been resolved and nirvikalpa samadhi--realization of the Self, Parasiva--has been attained. Same as mukti. See: jivanmukta, kaivalya, kundalini, nirvikalpa samadhi, Parasiva, raja yoga, videhamukti.

monastic: A monk or nun (based on the Greek monos, "alone"). A man or woman who has withdrawn from the world and lives an austere, religious life, either alone or with others in a monastery. (Not to be confused with monistic, having to do with the doctrine of monism.) Terms for Hindu monastics include sadhaka, sadhu, muni, tapasvin, vairagi, udasin and sannyasin. (Feminine: sadhika, sadhvi, muni, tapasvini, vairagini, and sannyasini.) A monastery-dweller is a mathavasi, and sadhu is a rough equivalent for mendicant. See: monk, sannyasin, sannyasini, vairagi.

monism: "Doctrine of oneness." 1) The philosophical view that there is only one ultimate substance or principle. 2) The view that reality is a unified whole without independent parts. See: dvaita-advaita, pluralism.

monistic theism: Advaita Ishvaravada. Monism is the doctrine that reality is a one whole or existence without independent parts. Theism is the belief that God exists as a real, conscious, personal Supreme Being. Monistic theism is the dipolar doctrine, also called panentheism, that embraces both monism and theism, two perspectives ordinarily considered contradictory or mutually exclusive, since theism implies dualism. Monistic theism simultaneously accepts that God has a personal form, that

He creates, pervades and is all that exists--and that He ultimately transcends all existence and that the soul is, in essence, one with God. Advaita Siddhanta (monistic Saiva Siddhanta, or Advaita Ishvaravada Saiva Siddhanta) is a specific form of monistic theism. See: advaita, Advaita Ishvaravada, Advaita Siddhanta, dvaita-advaita, panentheism, theism.

monk: A celibate man wholly dedicated to religious life, either cenobitic (residing with others in a monastery) or anchoritic (living alone, as a hermit or mendicant). Literally, "one who lives alone" (from the Greek monos, "alone"). Through the practice of yoga, the control and transmutation of the masculine and feminine forces within himself, the monk is a complete being, free to follow the contemplative and mystic life toward realization of the Self within. Benevolent and strong, courageous, fearless, not entangled in the thoughts and feelings of others, monks are affectionately detached from society, defenders of the faith, kind, loving and ever-flowing with timely wisdom. A synonym for monastic. Its feminine counterpart is nunk. See: monastic, sannyasin, nunk.

monotheism: "Doctrine of one God." Contrasted with polytheism, meaning belief in many Gods. The term monotheism covers a wide range of philosophical positions, from exclusive (or pure) monotheism, which recognizes only one God (such as in Semitic faiths), to inclusive monotheism, which also accepts the existence of other Gods. Generally speaking, the sects of Hinduism are inclusively monotheistic in their belief in a one Supreme God, and in their reverence for other Gods, or Mahadevas. However, such terms which arose out of Western philosophy do not really describe the fullness of Hindu thinking. Realizing this, the author of The Vedic Experience, Raimundo Panikkar, has offered a new word: cosmotheandrist, "world-God-man doctrine," which describes a philosophy that views God, soul and world (Pati, pashu, pasha) as an integrated, inseparable unity. See: Advaita Ishvaravada, monistic theism, Pati-pashu-pasha.

mortal: Subject to death. Opposite of immortal. See: amrita, death.

mortal sin: See: sin.

Mrigendra Agama: (Sanskrit) First subsidiary text (Upagama) of the Kamika Agama, one of the 28 Saiva Siddhanta Agamas. It is especially valuable because its jnana pada (philosophical section) is complete and widely available. Other noted sections are on hand gestures (mudra) used in puja and on establishing temporary places (yagashala) of special worship. See: pada, Saiva Agamas.

mudra: (Sanskrit) "Seal." Esoteric hand gestures which express specific energies or powers. Usually accompanied by precise visualizations, mudras are a vital element of ritual worship (puja), dance and yoga. Among the best-known mudras are: 1) abhaya mudra (gesture of fearlessness), in which the fingers are extended, palm facing forward; 2) anjali mudra (gesture of reverence); 3) jnana mudra (also known as chin

mudra and yoga mudra), in which the thumb and index finger touch, forming a circle, with the other fingers extended; 4) dhyana mudra (seal of meditation), in which the two hands are open and relaxed with the palms up, resting on the folded legs, the right hand atop the left with the tips of the thumbs gently touching. See: abhaya mudra, anjali mudra, hatha yoga, namaskara.

muhurta: (Sanskrit) "Moment." 1) A period of time. 2) A certain division of a day or night. Muhurtas vary slightly in length as the lengths of days and nights change through the year. There are at least three muhurta systems. The first defines one muhurta as 1/8th of a day or night (= 1.5 hours in a 12-hour night), the second as 1/15th of a day or night (= 48 minutes), and the third as 1/16th of a day or night (= 45 minutes). 3) Muhurta also refers to the astrological science of determining the most auspicious periods for specific activities. See: brahma muhurta, auspiciousness, sandhya upasana.

mukhya: (Sanskrit) "Head; foremost." From mukha, "face, countenance." Leader, guide; such as the family head, kutumba mukhya (or pramukha). See: extended family, joint family.

mukti: (Sanskrit) "Release." A synonym for moksha. See: moksha.

Mukti Upanishad: (Sanskrit) A 14th-century writing dealing in part with yoga.

mula: (Sanskrit) "Root." The root, base or bottom or basis of anything, as in muladhara chakra. Foundational, original or causal, as in mulagrantha, "original text."

mula mantra: (Sanskrit) "Root mystic formula." See: Aum.

muladhara chakra: (Sanskrit) "Root support center," from mula, "root," and adhara, "supporting." Four-petaled psychic center at the base of the spine; governs memory. See: chakra.

multitude: A very large number of things or people.

Mundaka Upanishad: (Sanskrit) Belongs to the Atharva Veda and teaches the difference between the intellectual study of the Vedas and their supplementary texts and the intuitive knowledge by which God is known.

muni: (Sanskrit) "Sage." A sage or sadhu, especially one vowed to complete silence or who speaks but rarely and who seeks stillness of mind. A hermit. The term is related to mauna, "silence." In the hymns of the Rig Veda, munis are mystic shamans associated with the God Rudra.

murti: (Sanskrit) "Form; manifestation, embodiment, personification." An image or icon of God or one of the many Gods used during worship. Murtis range from aniconic (avyakta, "nonmanifest"), such as the Sivalinga, to vyakta "fully manifest," e.g., anthropomorphic images such as Nataraja. In-between is the partially manifest (vyaktavyakta), e.g., the mukha linga, in which the face of Siva appears on the Sivalinga. Other Deity representations include symbols, e.g., the banyan tree, and geometric designs such as yantras and mandalas. Another important term for the Deity icon or idol is pratima, "reflected image." See: aniconic, Ishta Devata, teradi.

Murugan: (Tamil) "Beautiful one," a favorite name of Karttikeya among the Tamils of South India, Sri Lanka and elsewhere. See: Karttikeya.

muse: To think deeply.

Mushika: (Sanskrit) From mush, "to steal." The mouse, Lord Ganesha's mount, traditionally associated with abundance. Symbolically, the mouse carries Lord Ganesha's grace into every corner of the mind. See: Ganesha, vahana.

Muslim: "True believer." A follower of Islam. See: Islam.

mutual: Said of something which is thought, done or felt by two or more people toward each other. Shared.

mysticism: Spirituality; the pursuit of direct spiritual or religious experience. Spiritual discipline aimed at union or communion with Ultimate Reality or God through deep meditation or trance-like contemplation. From the Greek mystikos, "of mysteries." Characterized by the belief that Truth transcends intellectual processes and must be attained through transcendent means. See: clairaudient, clairvoyance, psychic, trance.

myth: Traditional story, usually ancient and of no known author, involving Gods, devas and heroes, and serving to illustrate great principles of life, customs, the origin of the universe, etc. See: folk narratives, katha.

mythology: Body of tales and legends. All the myths of a specific people, culture or religion. India's mythology is among the world's most bountiful. See: folk narratives, katha.

N

nada: (Sanskrit) "Sound; tone, vibration." Metaphysically, the mystic sounds of the Eternal, of which the highest is the transcendent or Soundless Sound, Paranada, the first vibration from which creation emanates. Paranada is so pure and subtle that it cannot be identified to the denser regions of the mind. From Paranada comes Pranava, Aum, and further evolutes of nada. These are experienced by the meditator as the nadanadi shakti, "the energy current of sound," heard pulsing through the nerve system as a constant high-pitched hum, much like a tambura, an electrical transformer, a swarm of bees or a shruti box. Listening to the inner sounds is a contemplative practice, called nada upasana, "worship through sound," nada anusandhana, "cultivation of inner sound," or nada yoga. The subtle variations of the nadanadi shakti represent the psychic wavelengths of established guru lineages of many Indian religions. Nada also refers to other psychic sounds heard during deep meditation, including those resembling various musical instruments. Most commonly, nada refers to ordinary sound. See: Aum, nadi, pranava, sound.

nadanadi shakti: (Sanskrit) "Energy current of sound." See: nada.

nadi: (Sanskrit) "Conduit." A nerve fiber or energy channel of the subtle (inner) bodies of man. It is said there are 72,000. These interconnect the chakras. The three main nadis are named ida, pingala and sushumna. **--ida:** (Sanskrit) Also known as chandra ("moon") nadi, it is pink in color and flows downward, ending on the left side of the body. This current is feminine in nature and is the channel of physical-emotional energy. **--pinga-a:** Also known as surya ("sun") nadi, it is blue in color and flows upward, ending on the right side of the body. This current is masculine in nature and is the channel of intellectual-mental energy. **--sushumna:** (Sanskrit) The major nerve current which passes through the spinal column from the muladhara chakra at the base to the sahasrara at the crown of the head. It is the channel of kundalini. Through yoga, the kundalini energy lying dormant in the muladhara is awakened and made to rise up this channel through each chakra to the sahasrara chakra. See: chakra, kundalini, raja yoga, tantrism.

naga: (Sanskrit) "Serpent," often the cobra; symbol of the kundalini coiled on the four petals of the muladhara chakra. See: kundalini, muladhara chakra.

naivedya: (Sanskrit) Food offered to the Deity at the temple or home altar. An important element in puja. See: prasada, puja.

nakshatra: (Sanskrit) "Star cluster." Central to astrological determinations, the nakshatras are 27 star-clusters, constellations, which lie along the ecliptic, or path of the sun. An individual's nakshatra, or birth star, is the constellation the moon was aligned with at the time of birth. See: jyotisha.

Nalvar: (Tamil) "Four devout beings." Four renowned saints of the Saiva religion (7th to 9th century): Appar, Sundarar, Sambandar and Manikkavasagar--devotional mystics whose lives and teachings helped catalyze a resurgence of Saivism in Tamil Nadu. All but Manikkavasagar are among the Nayanars, 63 saints canonized by Sekkilar in his Periyapuram (ca 1140). These four are also known as the Samayacharyas, "teachers of the faith." Their devotional poems are embodied in the Tirumurai, along with the writings of other Nayanars. Numerous South Indian temples celebrate their historic pilgrimages from shrine to shrine where they beseeched the grace of Siva through heartfelt song. Nalvar is a term not to be confused with Alvar, naming certain Vaishnava saints of the same period. See: Alvar, Nayanar, Tirumurai.

namadiksha: (Sanskrit) "Name initiation." Also known as namakarana samskara. See: samskaras of childhood.

Namah Sivaya: (Sanskrit) "Adoration (or homage) to Siva." The supreme mantra of Saivism, known as the Panchakshara or "five syllables." Na is the Lord's veiling grace; Ma is the world; Shi is Siva; Va is His revealing grace; Ya is the soul. The letters also represent the physical body: Na the legs, Ma the stomach, Shi the shoulders, Va the mouth and Ya the eyes. Embodying the essence of Saiva Siddhanta, it is found in the center of the central Veda (the Yajur) of the original three Vedas (Rig, Yajur and Sama). Namastaraya namah shambhave cha mayobhave cha, namah shankaraya cha mayaskaraya cha, namah sivaya cha sivayataraya cha. "Homage to the source of health and to the source of delight. Homage to the maker of health and to the maker of delight. Homage to the Auspicious, and to the more Auspicious" (Krishna Yajur Veda, Taittiriya Samhita 4.5.8). See: mantra, japa.

namakarana: (Sanskrit) "Name giving." See: samskaras of childhood.

namaskara: (Sanskrit) "Reverent salutations." Traditional Hindu verbal greeting and mudra where the palms are joined together and held before the heart or raised to the level of the forehead. The mudra is also called anjali. It is a devotional gesture made equally before a temple Deity, holy person, friend or momentary acquaintance. The hands held together connects the right side of the body with the left, and brings the nerve and nadi currents into poised balance, into a consciousness of the sushumna, awakening the third eye within the greeter to worship God in the greeted. See: anjali mudra, pranama.

namaste: (Sanskrit) "Reverent salutations to you." A traditional verbal greeting. A form of namas, meaning "bowing, obeisance." See: namaskara.

Namo Narayanaya: (Sanskrit) "Salutations to Lord Vishnu." The great mantra of the Vaishnava faith. Also a popular greeting among Vaishnavites and Smartas. See: Vaishnavism, Vishnu.

Nandi: (Sanskrit) "The joyful." A white bull with a black tail, the vahana, or mount, of Lord Siva, symbol of the powerful instinctive force tamed by Him. Nandi is the perfect devotee, the soul of man, kneeling humbly before God Siva, ever concentrated on Him. The ideal and goal of the Siva bhakta is to behold Siva in everything. See: vahana.

Nandikeshvara: (Sanskrit) "Lord of Nandi." A name of Siva. Also another name for Nandinatha, the first historically known guru of the Nandinatha Sampradaya. See: Kailasa Parampara, Natha Sampradaya.

Nandikeshvara Kashika: (Sanskrit) The only surviving work of Nandikeshvara (ca 250 bce). Its 26 verses are the earliest extant exposition of advaitic Saivism, aside from the Saiva Agamas.

Nandinatha: (Sanskrit) A synonym of Nandikeshvara. See: Kailasa Parampara.

Nandinatha Sampradaya: (Sanskrit) See: Natha Sampradaya.

Narada Sutra(s): (Sanskrit) A Vaishnava text of 84 aphorisms in which Sage Narada explains bhakti yoga (ca 1200).

Narada Parivrajaka: (Sanskrit) An Upanishad of the Atharva Veda which teaches of asceticism, sannyasa, true brahminhood, and more.

Naraka: (Sanskrit) Abode of darkness. Literally, "pertaining to man." The lower worlds. Equivalent to the Western term hell, a gross region of the Antarloka. Naraka is a congested, distressful area where demonic beings and young souls may sojourn until they resolve the darksome karmas they have created. Here beings suffer the consequences of their own misdeeds in previous lives. Naraka is understood as having seven regions, called tala, corresponding to the states of consciousness of the seven lower chakras as follows: 1) Put, "childless"--atala chakra, "wheel of the bottomless region." Fear and lust (located in the hips). 2) Avichi, "joyless"--vitala chakra: "wheel of negative region." Center of anger (thighs). 3) Samhata, "abandoned"--sutala chakra: "Great depth." Region of jealousy (knees). 4) Tamisra, "darkness"--talatala chakra: "wheel of the lower region." Realm of confused thinking (calves). 5) Rijisha, "expelled"--rasatala chakra: "wheel of subterranean region." Selfishness (ankles). 6) Kudmala, "leprous"--mahatala chakra: "wheel of the great lower region." Region of consciencelessness (feet). The intensity of "hell" begins at this deep level. 7) Kakola, "black poison"--patala chakra, "wheel of the fallen or sinful level." Region of malice (soles of the feet).

- The seven-fold hellish region in its entirety is also called patala, "fallen region." Scriptures offer other lists of hells, numbering 7 or 21. They are described as places of torment, pain, darkness, confusion and disease, but

none are places where souls reside forever. Hinduism has no eternal hell. See: hell, loka, purgatory (also, individual tala entries).

Narasinha Purvatapaniya: (Sanskrit) "The ascetic's surrender to Narasinha (incarnation of Vishnu as half-man, half-lion)." An Upanishad of the Atharva Veda which deals with worship of Vishnu.

Narayana: (Sanskrit) "Abode of men." A name of Lord Vishnu. See: Vishnu.

Narayanakantha: (Sanskrit) Great exponent of Saiva Siddhanta (ca 1050).

nastika: (Sanskrit) "One who denies; unbeliever." Opposite of astika, "one who asserts." The terms astika (orthodox) and nastika (unorthodox) are a traditional classification of Indian schools of thought. Nastika refers to all traditions that reject and deny the scriptural authority of the Vedas. This includes Sikhism, Jainism, Buddhism, the Charvaka materialists and others. Astika refers to those schools that accept the revealed authority of the Vedas as supreme scripture. This includes the four major sects: Saivism, Shaktism, Vaishnavism and Smartism. See: atheism, Charvaka, materialism.

Nataraja: (Sanskrit) "King of Dance," or "King of Dancers." God as the Cosmic Dancer. Perhaps Hinduism's richest and most eloquent symbol, Nataraja represents Siva, the Primal Soul, Parameshvara, as the power, energy and life of all that exists. This is Siva's intricate state of Being in Manifestation. The dance of Siva as Natesha, Lord of Dancers, is the dance of the entire cosmos, the rhythmic movements in all. All that is, whether sentient or insentient, pulsates in His body. Nataraja is art and spirituality in perfect oneness, chosen to depict the Divine because in dance that which is created is inseparable from its creator, just as the universe and soul cannot be separated from God. Nataraja is also stillness and motion wrought together. The stillness speaks of the peace and poise that lies within us all, at the center. The intense motion, depicted by His hair flying wildly in all directions, is an intimation of the fury and ferocity, the violent vigor, which fills this universe wherein we dwell. The implication of these opposites is that God contains and allows them both, that there is divine purpose at work in our life, whether we find ourselves engaged in its beauty or its "madness." Dance and dancer are one; not an atom moves on any plane of existence but by His Will. Thus, this elegant symbol embodies the underlying unity of all.

- Siva's Dance, or all that happens, is composed of an ever-flowing combination of His five potent actions, panchakriya: 1) **srishti:** creation, or emanation, represented by His upper right hand and the damaru (drum), upon which he beats Paranada, the Primal Sound from which issue forth the rhythms and

cycles of creation; 2) **sthiti**: preservation, represented by His lower right hand in a gesture of blessing, abhaya mudra, saying "fear not;" 3) **samhara**: destruction, dissolution or absorption, represented by the fire in His upper left hand, posed in ardhachandra mudra, "half-moon gesture;" 4) **tirobhava**: obscuring grace, the power which hides the truth, thereby permitting experience, growth and eventual fulfillment of destiny, represented by His right foot upon the prostrate person (Apasmarapurusha), the principle of ignorance, or anava; 5) **anugraha**: revealing grace--which grants knowledge and severs the soul's bonds--represented by Siva's raised left foot, and by His lower left hand, held in gajahasta ("elephant trunk") mudra, inviting approach. These five cosmic activities are sometimes personalized respectively as Brahma, Vishnu, Rudra, Maheshvara and Sadasiva--or as Sadyojata (creation), Vamadeva (preservation), Aghora (reabsorption), Tatpurusha (obscuration) and Ishana (granting grace).

- The ring of fire (prabhamandala), in which Siva dances is the hall of consciousness, chitsabha; in other words, the light-filled heart of man, the central chamber of the manifest cosmos. Siva dances the universe into and out of existence, veiling Ultimate Reality for most, unveiling it for devotees who draw near and recognize Parasiva, Ultimate Reality, in the chamber of their own inner being. Yea, all are dancing with Siva. See: nada, Parameshvara, Parashakti, Parasiva, Sadasiva.

Natchintanai: (Tamil) "Good thoughts." The collected songs of Sage Yogaswami (1872

1964) of Jaffna, Sri Lanka, extolling the power of the satguru, worship of Lord Siva, the path of dharma and the attainment of Self Realization. See: Kailasa Parampara.

Natha: (Sanskrit) "Master, lord; adept." Names an ancient Himalayan tradition of Saiva-yoga mysticism, whose first historically known exponent was Nandikeshvara (ca 250 bce). Natha--Self-Realized adept--designates the extraordinary ascetic masters (or devotees) of this school. Through their practice of siddha yoga they have attained tremendous powers, siddhis, and are sometimes referred to as siddha yogis (accomplished or fully enlightened ones). The words of such beings naturally penetrate deeply into the psyche of their devotees, causing mystical awakenings. Like all tantrics, Nathas have refused to recognize caste distinctions in spiritual pursuits. Their satgurus initiate from the lowest to the highest, according to spiritual worthiness. Natha also refers to any follower of the Natha tradition. The Nathas are

considered the source of hatha as well as raja yoga. See: Kailasa Parampara, Natha Sampradaya, siddha yoga.

Natha Matha: (Sanskrit) "Adepts' monastery." As a proper noun, a synonym for Siddha Siddhanta. See: Siddha Siddhanta.

Natha Sampradaya: (Sanskrit) "Transmitted doctrine (or theology) of the masters." Sampradaya means a living stream of tradition or theology. Natha Sampradaya is a philosophical and yogic tradition of Saivism whose origins are unknown. This oldest of Saivite sampradayas existing today consists of two major streams: the Nandinatha and the Adinatha. The Nandinatha Sampradaya has had as exemplars Maharishi Nandinatha and his disciples: Patanjali (author of the Yoga Sutras) and Tirumular (author of Tirumantiram). Among its representatives today are the successive siddhars of the Kailasa Parampara. The Adinatha lineage's known exemplars are Maharishi Adinatha, Matsyendranatha and Gorakshanatha, who founded a well-known order of yogis. See: Kailasa Parampara, Natha, Saivism, sampradaya.

Nayanar: (Tamil) "One who shows the way." The 63 canonized Tamil saints of South India, as documented in the Periyapuram by Sekkilar (ca 1140). All but a few were householders, honored as exemplars of radical devotion to Lord Siva, though their biographies are perhaps historically inaccurate and the actions of some were violent, even heinous. Several contributed to the Saiva Siddhanta scriptural compendium called Tirumurai. See: Nalvar, Tirumurai.

neo-Indian religion: Navabharata Dharma. A modern form of liberal Hinduism that carries forward basic Hindu cultural values--such as dress, diet and the arts--while allowing religious values to subside. It emerged after the British Raj, when India declared itself an independent, secular state. It was cultivated by the Macaulay education system, implanted in India by the British, which aggressively undermined Hindu thought and belief. Neo-Indian religion encourages Hindus to follow any combination of theological, scriptural, sadhana and worship patterns, regardless of sectarian or religious origin. Extending out of and beyond the Smarta system of worshipping the Gods of each major sect, it incorporates holy icons from all religions, including Jesus, Mother Mary and Buddha. Many Navabharatis choose to not call themselves Hindus but to declare themselves members of all the world's religions. See: panchayatana puja, Smartism, Smarta Sampradaya, syncretism, universalist.

Nepal: (Sanskrit) Ancient land between India and Tibet--50,000 square miles, population 24 million. It was the birthplace of Buddha and Sata, the original home of Matsyendranatha and is renowned for its Pashupatinatha Siva temple. Hinduism is the state religion.

neti neti: (Sanskrit) "Not this, not that." An Upanishadic formula connoting, through negation, the undefinable and inconceivable nature of the Absolute. It is an

affirmation which the meditating yogi applies to each thought and phase of the mind as he penetrates deeper and deeper in his quest for Truth. Ultimately he transcends all "this-ness" to realize That which is beyond the mind. See: kundalini, samadhi, raja yoga.

neuter: Having no sex or gender.

neutron star: A star which has collapsed in on itself and is extremely dense. A neutron star the size of an orange would weigh more than the entire earth.

new age: According to Webster's New World Dictionary: "Of or pertaining to a cultural movement popular in the 1980s [and 90s] characterized by a concern with spiritual consciousness, and variously combining belief in reincarnation and astrology with such practices as meditation, vegetarianism and holistic medicine."

New Year: The majority of Hindus in India celebrate the New Year according to traditional, pre-colonial calendars, several of which are still in use. There are, therefore, various New Year's days in different states of India, the two major ones being Dipavali in October-November, observed in North India, and the day when the sun enters Mesha (Aries) in April, celebrated in Tamil Nadu, Bengal and Nepal.

Nimbarka: (Sanskrit) Mystic, philosopher and founder of the Minandi Vaishnava school of Vedanta (ca 1150). He acclaimed the guru's grace as the only true means to salvation. See: Vedanta.

Nirguna Brahman: (Sanskrit) "God without qualities." See: Brahman.

Nirukta Vedanga: (Sanskrit) "Etymology Veda-limb." Auxiliary Vedic texts which discuss the origin and development of words; among the four linguistic skills taught for mastery of the Vedas and the rites of yajna. Nirukta relies upon ancient lexicons, nighantu, as well as detailed hymn indices, anukramani. Five nighantus existed at the time of Yaska (320 bce), whose treatise is regarded a standard work on Vedic etymology. See: Vedanga.

nirvahana: (Sanskrit) "End; completion." Conclusion.

nirvani and upadeshi: (Sanskrit) Nirvani means "extinguished one," and upadeshi means "teacher." In general, nirvani refers to a liberated soul, or to a certain class of monk. Upadeshi refers to a teacher, generally a renunciate. In Dancing with Siva, these two terms have special meaning, similar to the Buddhist arhat and bodhisattva, naming the two earthly modes of the realized, liberated soul. After full illumination, the jivanmukta has the choice to return to the world to help others along the path. This is the way of the upadeshi (akin to bodhisattva), exemplified by the benevolent satguru who leads seekers to the goal of God Realization. He may found and direct institutions and monastic lineages. The nirvani

(akin to arhat) abides at the pinnacle of consciousness, shunning all worldly involvement. He is typified by the silent ascetic, the reclusive sage. See: satguru, vishvagrasi.

nirvikalpa samadhi: (Sanskrit) "Enstasy (samadhi) without form or seed." The realization of the Self, Parasiva, a state of oneness beyond all change or diversity; beyond time, form and space. Vi means "to change, make different." Kalpa means "order, arrangement; a period of time." Thus vikalpa means "diversity, thought; difference of perception, distinction." Nir means "without." See: enstasy, kalpa, raja yoga, samadhi.

nishchitartha: (Sanskrit) "Engagement (to be married); resolution of aim." Synonym for vagdana. See: marriage covenant, samskaras of adulthood.

Nityananda: (Sanskrit) The reclusive sage (?--1961) known as Bhagavan, "the exalted one," who lived an extraordinary mystic life near Mumbai, India, and initiated a number of disciples, including Swami Muktananda.

nivedana: (Sanskrit) "Announcement, presentation, making known."

niyama: (Sanskrit) "Restraint." See: yama-niyama.

niyati: (Sanskrit) "Necessity, restriction; the fixed order of things, destiny." A synonym for karma, niyati is the eighth tattva. It is part of the soul's five-fold "sheath," pancha kanchuka (or vijnanamaya kosha), along with kala (time), kala (creativity), vidya (knowing) and raga (attachment, desire). The soul thus encased is called purusha. See: karma, tattva.

nondual (nondualism): See: dvaita-advaita, monistic theism, Vedanta.

nonhuman birth: The phenomenon of the soul being born as nonhuman life forms, explained in various scriptures. For example, Saint Manikkavasagar's famous hymn (Tiruvasagam 8.14): "I became grass and herbs, worm and tree. I became many beasts, bird and snake. I became stone and man, goblins and sundry celestials. I became mighty demons, silent sages and the Gods. Taken form in life, moveable and immovable, born in all, I am weary of birth, my Great Lord." The Upanishads, too, describe the soul's course after death and later taking a higher or lower birth according to its merit or demerit of the last life (Kaush. U. 1.2, Chand. U. 5.35.10, Brihad. U. 6.2).

- These statements are sometimes misunderstood to mean that each soul must slowly, in sequential order incarnate as successively higher beings, beginning with the lowest organism, to finally obtain a human birth. In fact, as the

Upanishads explain, after death the soul, reaching the inner worlds, reaps the harvest of its deeds, is tested and then takes on the appropriate incarnation-- be it human or nonhuman--according to its merit or demerit. Souls destined for human evolution are human-like from the moment of their creation in the Sivaloka. This is given outer expression in the Antarloka and Bhuloka, on earth or other similar planets, as the appropriate sheaths are developed. However, not all souls are human souls. There are many kinds of souls, such as genies, elementals and certain Gods, who evolve toward God through different patterns of evolution than do humans.

- One cause of unclarity is to confuse the previously mentioned scriptural passages with the theory of biological evolution developed by Charles Darwin (1809-1882), which states that plant and animal species develop or evolve from earlier forms due to hereditary transmission of variations that enhance the organism's adaptability and chances of survival. These principles are now considered the kernel of biology. Modern scientists thus argue that the human form is a development from earlier primates, including apes and monkeys. The Darwinian theory is reasonable but incomplete as it is based in a materialistic conception of reality that does not encompass the existence of the soul. While the Upanishadic evolutionary vision speaks of the soul's development and progress through reincarnation, the Darwinian theory focuses on evolution of the biological organism, with no relation to a soul or individual being. See: evolution of the soul, kosha, reincarnation, soul.

noninjurious: Which does not cause harm or injury. --**noninjuriousness:** A translation of ahimsa, the principle of not causing harm or injury to living beings, whether by thought, word or deed. See: ahimsa.

nonperseverance: The act, practice or attitude of not persisting, giving up too easily. See: yama-niyama.

nonviolence: See: ahimsa.

Northern Saivism: A name for Kashmir Saivism. See: Kashmir Saivism.

notable: Worthy of being noted. Remarkable.

novelty: Newness. The constant changes and enchantments of life.

novitiate: Same as novice. A newcomer to a monastic or religious community, on probation, before taking final vows.

nucleus of the soul: See: atman, impersonal being, soul.

nunk: A contemporary word coined by Catholic theologian Raimundo Panikkar to describe women contemplatives or female monks, in contrast to the word nun which commonly describes a religious teacher or service-oriented woman under vows. A nunk is a celibate woman following strict, perhaps austere and usually solitary, spiritual disciplines and lifestyle. By balancing the masculine and feminine energies within herself through sadhana and yoga, she is a complete being, detached from the thoughts and feelings of others, free to follow the contemplative and mystical life in pursuit of the Self within. To accomplish this, she works to permanently conquer her feminine instincts and the emotional tendencies of a woman's body. She strives to transmute her sexuality into the Divine, giving up her womanliness so thoroughly that she is indistinguishable from a monk. In Hinduism, nunks may be sannyasinis, yoginis or sadhikas. See: monastic, sannyasin, monk.

nurturance: Same as nurture, to nourish. The act or process or furnishing the essentials to growth, development or education.

Nyaya: (Sanskrit) "System; rule; logic." See: Gautama, shad darshana.

O

objective: 1) Quality of thinking or perception relating to the object as it truly is. Not biased or colored by one's personal point of view or prejudices, which then would be subjective thinking. 2) A target, goal or anything sought for or aimed at. Cf: subjective.

oblation: An offering or sacrifice ceremoniously given to a God or guru. See: sacrifice, yajna.

obscuration: Same as obscuring grace. See: grace, Nataraja.

obscuring grace: See: grace, Nataraja.

obstacle: See: upasarga.

obstinate (obstinacy): Overly determined to have one's own way. Stubborn.

occult: Hidden, or kept secret; revealed only after initiation. See: mysticism.

odic: Magnetic--of or pertaining to consciousness within ashuddha maya, the realm of the physical and lower astral planes. Odic force in its rarified state is prakriti, the primary gross energy of nature, manifesting in the three gunas: sattva, rajas and tamas. It is the force of attraction and repulsion between people, people and their things, and manifests as masculine (aggressive) and feminine (passive), arising from the pingala and ida currents. These two currents (nadi) are found within spine of the subtle body. Odic force is a magnetic, sticky, binding substance that people seek to develop when they want to bind themselves together, such as in partnerships, marriage, guru-shishya relationships and friendships. Odic energy is the combined emanation of the pranamaya and annamaya koshas. The term odic is the adjective form of od (pronounced like mode), defined in the Oxford English Dictionary as "a hypothetical force held by Baron von Reichenbach (1788-1869) to pervade all nature, manifesting itself in certain persons of sensitive temperament (streaming from their fingertips), and exhibited especially by magnets, crystals, heat, light and chemical action; it has been held to explain the phenomena of mesmerism and animal magnetism." See: actinic, actinodic, guna, kosha, odic, subtle body, tattva.

offset: Made up for, compensated for, counterbalanced by.

offspring: The young of animals. Children. Sanskrit: apatya.

olai: (Tamil) "Leaf." An ancient form of Indian books used in South India, made of strips of fronds from the palmyra (trindruma) and talipot (talapatra, "fan-leaf") palms. Prepared birch bark (bhurja pattra) was the medium in the North. The pages

were loosely tied, with cord passed between one or two holes and usually bound between wooden covers. Ink, made from lampblack or charcoal, was applied with a reed pen. Or, more commonly in the South, the letters were scribed with a stylus, then rubbed with powdered lampblack. These books are small in size, averaging about 2 inches high and 8 inches wide and up to 11 or 12 inches thick, wound with string and generally protected in colored cloth. See: grantha.

old soul: One who has reincarnated many times, experienced much and is therefore further along the path. Old souls may be recognized by their qualities of compassion, self-effacement and wisdom. See: evolution of the soul, soul.

Om: (Sanskrit) "Yes, verily." The most sacred mantra of Hinduism. An alternate transliteration of Aum (the sounds A and U blend to become O). See: Aum.

ominous: Foreboding; frightening, sinister.

omnipotent: All-powerful. Able to do anything.

omnipresent: Present everywhere and in all things.

omniscient: Having infinite knowledge, all-knowing.

oneness: Quality or state of being one. Unity, identity, especially in spite of appearances to the contrary--e.g., the oneness of soul and God. See: monism.

ontology: The branch of metaphysics dealing with the nature of reality.

orbit: The path taken by a celestial object gravitating around another.

ordain (ordination): To confer the duties and responsibilities, authority and spiritual power of a religious office, such as priest, minister or satguru, through religious ceremony or mystical initiation. See: diksha.

original sin: See: sin.

orthodox: "Straight opinion." Conforming to established doctrines or beliefs. Opposite of heterodox, "different opinion." See: astika.

outgrow (outgrown): To grow faster or larger than and, therefore, to lose or be rid of in the process of growing.

outstretch: To extend, to stretch out, as one's arms or a large cloth.

overshadow: To cast a shadow over or be more important than; to dominate.

overwhelm: To overcome or overpower as with great force or emotion.

P

pada: (Sanskrit) "A step, pace, stride; footstep, trace."

pada: (Sanskrit) "The foot (of men and animals); quarter-part, section; stage; path." Names the major sections of the Agamic texts and the corresponding stages of practice and unfoldment on the path to moksha. According to Saiva Siddhanta, there are four padas, which are successive and cumulative; i.e. in accomplishing each one the soul prepares itself for the next. (In Tamil, Saiva Siddhanta is also known as Nalu-pada, "four-stage," Saivam.)--**charya pada:** "Good conduct stage." Stage one, learning to live righteously, serve selflessly, performing karma yoga. It is also known as dasa marga, "path of the slave," a time when the aspirant relates to God as a servant to a master. Traditional acts of charya include cleaning the temple, lighting lamps and collecting flowers for worship. Worship at this stage is mostly external.--**kriya pada:** "Religious action; worship stage." Stage of bhakti yoga, of cultivating devotion through performing puja and regular daily sadhana. It is also known as the satputra marga, "true son's way," as the soul now relates to God as a son to his father. A central practice of the kriya pada is performing daily puja.--**yoga pada:** "Stage of union." Having matured in the charya and kriya padas, the soul now turns to internalized worship and raja yoga under the guidance of a satguru. It is a time of sadhana and serious striving when realization of the Self is the goal. It is the sakha marga, "way of the friend," for now God is looked upon as an intimate friend.--**jnana pada:** "Stage of wisdom." Once the soul has attained Realization, it is henceforth a wise one, who lives out the life of the body, shedding blessings on mankind. This stage is also called the San Marga, "true path," on which God is our dearest beloved. The Tirumantiram describes the fulfillment of each stage as follows. In charya, the soul forges a kindred tie in "God's world" (salokya). In kriya it attains "nearness" (samipya) to Him. In yoga it attains "likeness" (sarupya) with Him. In jnana the soul enjoys the ultimate bliss of identity (sayujya) with Siva. See: jnana, nirvani and upadeshi.

padapuja: (Sanskrit) "Foot worship." Ceremonial worship of the guru's sandals or holy feet, often through ablution with precious substances and offering of fruit and flowers. After the ceremony, the water of the bath, the fruit and other precious substances are partaken of as prasada by the devotees. See: guru, guru bhakti, paduka, prasada, ucchishta.

padartha: (Sanskrit) "Constituent substance." Primary categories or essential elements of existence, defined differently or uniquely by each philosophical school. For example, in the Sankhya Darshana, the padarthas are purusha (spirit) and prakriti (matter). According to Advaita Vedanta, they are chit (spirit) and achit (nonspirit), which from an absolute perspective are taken as the One padartha,

Brahman. In Shakta and Saiva traditions, the padarthas are Pati (God), pashu (soul) and pasha (world, or bonds).

paddhati: (Sanskrit) "Foot-path; track; guide." The name of a class of expository writings, e.g., Gorakshanatha's Siddha Siddhanta Paddhati, and the many paddhatis that are guidebooks for ritual temple rites. There are paddhatis for the Vedas and for the Agamas.

padma: (Sanskrit) The lotus flower, *Nelumbo nucifera*, symbol of spiritual development and the chakras. Because it grows out of mud and rises to perfect purity and glory, it is an apt representation of spiritual unfoldment.

Padma Purana: (Sanskrit) One of the six main Vishnu Puranas.

paduka: (Sanskrit) "Sandals." Sri Paduka refers to the sandals of the preceptor, the traditional icon of the guru, representing his venerable feet and worshiped as the source of grace. Paduka also names one of Vira Saivism's eight aids (ashtavarana) to faith--the practice of drinking the water from the ceremonial washing of the Sivalinga or the guru's feet. See: guru bhakti, padapuja, prasada, satguru, uchhishta.

pagan: Term used negatively by Semitic faiths to indicate a follower of another religion, or of no religion. Also names the pre-Christian religion of Europe, akin to shamanism and other of the world's indigenous faiths, which have survived to this day despite organized persecution. Pagans are gradually surfacing again, and have acknowledged their kinship with Hinduism. See: mysticism, shamanism.

pageantry: A spectacular and grand representation, elaborately decorated show, procession, drama, etc. See: festival.

Paingala Upanishad: (Sanskrit) Belongs to the Shukla Yajur Veda. A 12-verse dialog between Sage Yajnavalkya and his disciple Paingala covering a wide range of topics, including liberation and the five sheaths of man.

panchabhuta: (Sanskrit) "Five elements." Earth, water, fire, air and ether. Also called mahabhuta. See: indriya, tattva.

panchachara: (Sanskrit) "Five rules." The five Vira Saivite codes of conduct. --**Lingachara:** Daily worship of the Sivalinga. --**sadachara:** attention to vocation and duty. --**Sivachara:** Acknowledging Siva as the one God and observing equality among members. --**bhriyachara:** Humility toward all creatures. --**ganachara:** defense of the community and its tenets.

Pancha Ganapati Utsava: (Sanskrit) "Five-fold Ganapati festival." A modern five-day festival observed from the 21st through 25th of December. Pancha (five) denotes Ganesha's five faces, each representing a specific power (shakti). One face is

worshiped each day, creating 1) harmony in the home, 2) concord among relatives, neighbors and friends, 3) good business and public relations, 4) cultural upliftment and 5) heartfelt charity and religiousness. The festival, a favorite among children, was conceived in 1985 by Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami along with elders of various Hindu sects. It is a time of sharing gifts, renewing ties of family and friendship while focusing inwardly on this great God of abundance. See: Ganesha.

Panchakshara Mantra: (Sanskrit) "Five-syllabled incantation." Saivism's most sacred mantra. See: Namah Sivaya.

Panchamukha Ganapati: (Sanskrit) "Five-faced Ganapati." A special form of Lord Ganesha with five faces; similar to Siddhi Ganapati.

pancha nitya karma(s): (Sanskrit) "Five constant duties." A traditional regimen of religious practice for Hindus: 1) dharma (virtuous living), 2) upasana (worship), 3) utsava (holy days), 4) tirthayatra (pilgrimage) and 5) samskaras (sacraments.) See: dharma, festival, samskara, tirthayatra.

Pancharatra: (Sanskrit) An ancient name of Vaishnavism. The term literally means "five nights," but may be a corruption of pancharatha ("five vehicles, ways or paths"), thought to indicate five ancient sects in the vicinity of Mathura that eventually merged into one with the worship of Krishna.

Pancharatra Agama(s): (Sanskrit) The most popular of the two major groups of Vaishnava Agamas (the other being the Vaikasana Agamas).

Panchartha Bhashya: (Sanskrit) Commentary by Kaundinya (ca 100) on Lakulisha's Pashupata Sutras, one of the few extant philosophical texts of Pashupata Saivism. It was rediscovered in 1930. See: Pashupata Saivism.

pancha shraddha: (Sanskrit) "Five faiths." A concise summary of Hindu belief exactly correlated to the "five constant practices," pancha nitya karmas. The pancha shraddha are 1) sarva Brahman: God is All in all, soul is divine; 2) mandira: belief in temples and divine beings; 3) karma: cosmic justice; 4) samsaramoksha: rebirth brings enlightenment and liberation; 5) Vedas and satguru: the necessity of scripture and preceptor. See: pancha nitya karma.

Panchatantra: (Sanskrit) The collection of animal stories used by sage Vishnu Sharma to teach the king's sons the "art of practical life." They were written down in Sanskrit in about 200 bce, but existed previously as part of oral tradition. The engaging stories have migrated all over the world to reappear in Aesop's Fables, Arabian Nights, Canterbury Tales and in ancient Chinese and Japanese works. See: folk-narratives, mythology.

panchayatana puja: (Sanskrit) "Five-shrine worship." A system of personal worship, thought to have developed after the 7th century, in the Smarta brahminical tradition, and which is now part of orthodox daily practice for Smartas. The ritual involves the worship of five Deities: Vishnu, Siva, Surya, Ganesha and Shakti. The five are represented by small murtis, or by five kinds of stones, or by five marks drawn on the floor. One is placed in the center as the devotee's preferred God, Ishta Devata, and the other four in a square around it. Kumara, often added as a sixth Deity, is generally situated behind the Ishta Devata. Philosophically, all are seen by Smartas as equal reflections of the one Saguna Brahman, rather than as distinct beings. This arrangement is also represented in Smarta temples, with one in a central sanctum, and the others installed in smaller shrines. Each God may be worshiped in any of His/Her traditional aspects or incarnations, allowing for much variety (e.g., Shakti as Lakshmi, Vishnu as Rama, and Siva as Bhairava). With the addition of the sixth Deity, Kumara, the system is known as shanmata, "six-fold path." This system has laid the foundation for the modern secular or neo-Indian religion, in which Hindus freely add Jesus, mother Mary, Mohammed, Buddha or any other holy personage to their altars. This modern approach has no basis in traditional scripture of any kind. See: Ishta Devata, neo-Indian religion, shanmata sthapanacharya, Smartism.

pandit (pandita): (Sanskrit) "Learned one." Hindu religious scholar or theologian, a man well versed in philosophy, liturgy, religious law and sacred science.

panentheism: "All-in-God doctrine." The view that the universe is part of the being of God, as distinguished from pantheism ("all-is-God doctrine"), which identifies God with the total reality. In contrast, panentheism holds that God pervades the world, but is also beyond it. He is immanent and transcendent, relative and Absolute. This embracing of opposites is called dipolar. For the panentheist, God is in all, and all is in God. Panentheism is the technical term for monistic theism. See: Advaita Ishvaravada, dvaita-advaita, monistic theism, pantheism.

pantheism: "All-is-God doctrine." A term applied to a variety of philosophical position in which God and the world are identical. To the pantheist, God is not a Personal Lord, nor a transcendent or formless Being, but is the totality of all existence, including universal laws, movement, matter, etc. See: monistic theism, panentheism.

papa: (Sanskrit) "Wickedness; sin, crime." 1) Bad or evil. 2) Wrongful action. 3) Demerit earned through wrongdoing. Papa includes all forms of wrongdoing, from the simplest infraction to the most heinous crime, such as premeditated murder. Each act of papa carries its karmic consequence, karmaphala, "fruit of action," for which scriptures delineate specific penance for expiation. Those who have awakened psychic sight can clearly see papa in the inner subconscious aura as a colorful, sticky, astral substance. Papa is seen as dark unrelated colors, whereas its counterpart, punya, is seen as pastels. The color arrangements are not unlike modern art murals.

Papa colors can produce disease, depression, loneliness and such, but can be dissolved through penance (prayashchitta), austerity (tapas) and good deeds (sukritya).

- There are specific consequences, karmaphala, "fruit of action," that result from each type of transgression of dharma. For example, a man who steals from his neighbors creates a cosmic debt which may be repaid later by having his own possessions taken away. There are also specific penances, prayashchitta, that can be performed for atonement and the accrual of punya (merit) to balance out the papa, the negative karma of the wrongful act. Such disciplines are provided in the various Dharma Shastras and prescribed by knowing preceptors, panditas, shastris, swamis, yogis and village elders according to the varna and education of the individual.
- For example, the Laws of Manu give several types of penance for the crime of murder, including 1) making a forest hut and subsisting there on alms for twelve years and using a human skull as one's emblem; or 2) walking 100 yojanas (900 miles), while reciting the Vedas, eating little and remaining continent. A contemporary example: if a man fells a large healthy tree, he may atone by planting ten trees and ensuring that at least one grows to replace it.
- The degree of papa accrued from an action depends on various factors, including the karma, dharma and spiritual advancement of the individual, the intent or motivation, as well as the time and place of the action (for example, unvirtuous deeds carry great demerit when performed in holy places). Papa is the opposite of punya (merit, virtue). See: evil, karma, penance, punya, sin.

papa-duhkha: (Sanskrit) "Sin and suffering." See: karma, papa, sin.

papman: (Sanskrit) "Evil; sin." See: evil, papa, Satan, sin.

para: (Sanskrit) "Supreme; beyond." A term referring to the highest dimension of whatever it precedes--as in Parasiva or Parabrahman. (Sometimes para, as in Parashakti.)

parable: A short, simple story illustrating a moral or religious principle.

Parabrahman: (Sanskrit) "Supreme (or transcendent) God." A synonym for Nirguna Brahman, Absolute Reality, beyond time, form and space. Same as Parasiva. See: Brahman, Parasiva.

paradox: "Side-by-side opinion or thought." An apparent contradiction according to conventional logic and reason.

Parakhya Agama: (Sanskrit) A subsidiary Saiva Agamic text (Upagama).

parama: (Sanskrit) "Highest; supreme." See: para.

paramaguru: (Sanskrit) "Senior preceptor." The guru of a disciple's guru.

paramahamsa: (Sanskrit) "Supreme swan." From hamsa, meaning swan or, more precisely, the high-flying Indian goose, Anser Indicus. A class of liberated renunciates. See: hamsa.

Paramatman: (Sanskrit) "Supreme Self," or "transcendent soul." Parasiva, Absolute Reality, the one transcendent Self of every soul. Contrasted with atman, which includes all three aspects of the soul: Parasiva, Parashakti and anandamaya kosha. See: atman, kosha, soul.

Parameshvara: (Sanskrit) "Supreme Lord or Ruler." God Siva in the third perfection as Supreme Mahadeva, Siva-Shakti, mother of the universe. In this perfection as Personal, father-mother God, Siva is a person--who has a body, with head, arms and legs, etc.--who acts, wills, blesses, gives darshana, guides, creates, preserves, reabsorbs, obscures and enlightens. In Truth, it is Siva-Shakti who does all. The term Primal Soul, Paramapurusha, designates Parameshvara as the original, uncreated soul, the creator of all other souls. Parameshvara has many other names and epithets, including those denoting the five divine actions--Sadasiva, the revealer; Maheshvara, the obscurer; Brahma, the creator; Vishnu the preserver; and Rudra the destroyer. See: Nataraja, Sadasiva.

parampara: (Sanskrit) "Uninterrupted succession." A lineage. See: guru parampara.

parartha puja: (Sanskrit) "Public liturgy and worship." See: puja.

Parashakti: (Sanskrit) "Supreme power; primal energy." God Siva's second perfection, which is impersonal, immanent, and with form--the all-pervasive, Pure Consciousness and Primal Substance of all that exists. There are many other descriptive names for Parashakti--Satchidananda ("existence-consciousness-bliss"), light, silence, divine mind, superconsciousness and more. Parashakti can be experienced by the diligent yogi or meditator as a merging in, or identification with, the underlying oneness flowing through all form. The experience is called savikalpa samadhi. See: raja yoga, Shakti, Satchidananda, tattva.

Parasamvid: (Sanskrit) In Siddha Siddhanta the highest, transcendental state of Siva. A synonym of Parasiva.

Parasiva: (Sanskrit) "Transcendent Siva." The Self God, Siva in His first perfection, Absolute Reality. God Siva as That which is beyond the grasp of consciousness, transcends time, form and space and defies description. To merge with Him in mystic union is the goal of all incarnated souls, the reason for their living on this planet, and the deepest meaning of their experiences. Attainment of this is called Self Realization or nirvikalpa samadhi. See: samadhi, Siva.

Parvati: (Sanskrit) "Mountain's daughter." One of many names for the Universal Mother. Prayers are offered to Her for strength, health and eradication of impurities. Mythologically, Parvati is wedded to Siva. See: Goddess, Shakti.

pasha: (Sanskrit) "Tether; noose." The whole of existence, manifest and unmanifest. That which binds or limits the soul and keeps it (for a time) from manifesting its full potential. Pasha refers to the soul's three-fold bondage of anava, karma and maya. See: liberation, mala, Pati-pashu-pasha.

pashu: (Sanskrit) "Cow, cattle, kine; fettered individual." Refers to animals or beasts, including man. In philosophy, the soul. Siva as lord of creatures is called Pashupati. See: pasha, Pati-pashu-pasha.

pashupalaka: (Sanskrit) "Herdsman." A person who protects, nourishes and guards. A name for a Hindu chaplain or missionary.

Pashupata Saivism: (Sanskrit) Monistic and theistic, this school of Saivism reveres Siva as Supreme Cause and Personal Ruler of soul and world, denoted in His form as Pashupati, "Lord of souls." This school centers around the ascetic path, emphasizing sadhana, detachment from the world and the quest for "internal kundalini grace." The Karavana Mahatmya recounts the birth of Lakulisha (ca 200 bce), a principal Pashupata guru, and refers to the temple of Somanatha as one of the most important Pashupata centers. Lakulisha propounded a Saiva monism, though indications are that Pashupata philosophy was previously dualistic, with Siva as efficient cause of the universe but not material cause. It is thought to be the source of various ascetic streams, including the Kapalikas and the Kalamukhas. This school is represented today in the broad sadhu tradition, and numerous Pashupata sites of worship are scattered across India. See: Saivism.

Pashupata Sutra(s): (Sanskrit) The recently rediscovered (1930) central scripture of the Pashupata school of Saivism, attributed to Lakulisha. It covers asceticism at great length, and the five subjects of Pashupata theology: effect, cause, meditation, behavior and dissolution of sorrow. It urges the ascetic to go unrecognized and even invite abuse. See: Pashupata Saivism.

Pashupati: (Sanskrit) "Herdsman; lord of animals." An ancient name for Siva, first appearing in the Atharva Veda. This form of Siva, seated in yogic pose, was found on

a seal from the 6,000-year-old Indus Valley civilization. See: Pashupata Saivism, Saivism.

Pashupatinatha mandira: (Sanskrit) Foremost temple of Nepal, linked to the ancient Pashupata sect of Saivism.

patala: (Sanskrit) "Fallen or sinful region." The seventh chakra below the muladhara, centered in the soles of the feet. Corresponds to the seventh and lowest astral netherworld beneath the earth's surface, called Kakola ("black poison") or Patala. This is the realm in which misguided souls indulge in destruction for the sake of destruction, of torture, and of murder for the sake of murder. Patala also names the netherworld in general, and is a synonym for Naraka. See: chakra, loka, Naraka.

Patanjali: (Sanskrit) "Possessed of reverence." A Saivite Natha siddha (ca 200 bce) who codified the ancient yoga philosophy which outlines the path to enlightenment through purification, control and transcendence of the mind. One of the six classical philosophical systems (darshanas) of Hinduism, known as Yoga Darshana. His great work, the Yoga Sutras, comprises 200 aphorisms delineating ashtanga (eight-limbed), raja (kingly) or siddha (perfection) yoga. Still today it is the foremost text on meditative yoga. See: Kailasa Parampara, raja yoga, shad darshana, yoga.

path: Marga or pantha. A trail, road or way. In Hinduism there are various ways that the term path is used. --**path of enlightenment/salvation/moksha:** The way to the ultimate goals of Self Realization and liberation. --**universal path:** The spiritual path conceived as being followed by all of existence, marching on its way to Godhood. --**path of dharma:** Following principles of good conduct and virtue. --**the two paths:** The way of the monk and that of the householder, a choice to be made by each Hindu young man. --**peerless/highest path:** The spiritual path (or the path of renunciation) as the noblest of human undertakings. --**the straight path:** The way that goes directly to the goal, without distraction or karmic detour. --**on the path:** someone who is seriously studying, striving and performing sadhana to perfect the inner and outer nature. --**our right path in life:** The best way for us personally to proceed; personal dharma, svadharma. --**"Truth is one, paths are many:"** Hinduism's affirmation for tolerance. It accepts that there are various ways to proceed toward the ultimate goal. See: dharma, pada.

pathaka: (Sanskrit) "Reader, reciter." An inspired reader of scripture and sacred literature.

Pati: (Sanskrit) "Master; lord; owner." A name for God Siva indicating His commanding relationship with souls as caring ruler and helpful guide. In Saiva Siddhanta the term is part of the analogy of cowherd (pati), cows (pashu, souls) and the tether (pasha--anava, karma and maya) by which cows are tied. See: Pati-pashu-pasha, Siva.

Pati-pashu-pasha: (Sanskrit) Literally: "master, cow and tether." These are the three primary elements (padartha, or tattvatrayi) of Saiva Siddhanta philosophy: God, soul and world--Divinity, man and cosmos--seen as a mystically and intricately interrelated unity. Pati is God, envisioned as a cowherd. Pashu is the soul, envisioned as a cow. Pasha is the all-important force or fetter by which God brings souls along the path to Truth. The various schools of Hinduism define the rapport among the three in varying ways. For pluralistic Saiva Siddhantins they are three beginningless verities, self-existent, eternal entities. For monistic Saiva Siddhantins, pashu and pasha are the emanational creation of Pati, Lord Siva, and He alone is eternal reality. See: pasha, Saiva Siddhanta, soul.

Paushkara Agama: (Sanskrit) Subsidiary text (Upagama) of the Matanga Parameshvara Saiva Agama, containing 977 verses divided into 90 chapters. A mostly philosophic treatise dealing with God, soul and world and the instruments of knowledge.

penance: Prayashchitta. Atonement, expiation. An act of devotion (bhakti), austerity (tapas) or discipline (sukritya) undertaken to soften or nullify the anticipated reaction to a past action. Penance is uncomfortable karma inflicted upon oneself to mitigate one's karmic burden caused by wrongful actions (kukarma). It includes such acts as prostrating 108 times, fasting, self-denial, or carrying kavadi (public penance), as well as more extreme austerities, or tapas. Penance is often suggested by spiritual leaders and elders. Penitence or repentance, suffering regret for misdeeds, is called anutapa, meaning "to heat." See: evil, kavadi, papa, prayashchitta, sin, tapas.

pendant: An ornament or piece of jewelry attached to a necklace. See: wedding pendant.

perfections: Describes a quality, nature or dimension that is perfect. God Siva's three perfections are Parasiva, Parashakti and Parameshvara. Though spoken of as three-fold for the sake of understanding, God Siva ever remains a one transcendent-immanent Being. See: Siva.

Periyapuranam: (Tamil) (Sanskrit) Twelfth book of the Tirumurai. Story of the 63 Saiva Nayanar saints of Tamil Nadu, written by Sekkilar (ca 1140). See: Tirumurai.

personal dharma: Svadharma. An individual's unique path in life in conformance with divine law. See: dharma.

Personal God: See: Ishta Devata, Parameshvara.

perspective: Point of view in understanding or evaluation.

pilgrimage: Tirthayatra. Journeying to a holy temple, near or far, performed by all Hindus at least once each year. See: tirthayatra.

pinda: (Sanskrit) "Roundish mass; body; part of the whole, individual; microcosm." In worship rites, small balls of rice set aside daily in remembrance of ancestors. Philosophically, and emphasized in Siddha Siddhanta, the human body as a replica of the macrocosm, mahasakara pinda, also called Brahmanda (cosmic egg), or simply anda (egg). Within the individual body of man is reflected and contained the entire cosmos. Each chakra represents a world or plane of consciousness with the highest locus in the head and the lowest in the feet. "Microcosm-macrocosm" is embodied in the terms pinda-anda. Siddha Siddhanta Paddhati lists six pindas, from the garbhapinda, "womb-born body," to parapinda, "transcendental body." See: Brahmanda, microcosm-macrocosm.

pingala: (Sanskrit) "Tawny channel." The masculine psychic current flowing along the spine. See: kundalini, nadi, raja yoga.

pir: "Holy father." Muslim title for a religious leader; applied to leaders of a few Gorakshanatha monasteries.

pitha: (Sanskrit) "Seat; pedestal." 1) The base or pedestal of the Sivalinga, or of any Deity idol. 2) A religious seat, such as the throne of the abbot of a monastery. 3) An aadheenam, ashrama or matha established around such a seat of spiritual authority. See: Sivalinga.

Pitri-loka: (Sanskrit) "World of ancestors." The upper region of Bhuvanloka. See: loka.

pitta: (Sanskrit) "Bile; fire." One of the three bodily humors, called doshas, pitta is known as the fire humor. It is the ayurvedic principle of bodily heat-energy. Pitta dosha governs nutritional absorption, body temperature and intelligence. See: ayurveda, dosha.

plague: To distress, afflict, trouble or torment.

plane: A stage or level of existence; e.g., the causal plane (Sivaloka). See: loka.

Pleiades: A cluster of stars in the Taurus constellation, six of which are now visible from Earth. This group of stars is known in Sanskrit as Krittika, an important nakshatra for Lord Karttikeya and believed to be this Deity's place of origin before He came to the star system of Earth. See: Karttikeya.

pliant: Flexible, adaptable, not rigid.

Plotinus: Egyptian-born philosopher (205-270), one of the Western world's greatest known mystics, who extended and revived the work of the Greek philosopher Plato in the Roman Empire. His philosophy, known as Neo-Platonism, posits concentric levels of reality, not unlike the Hindu cosmology of lokas, with a central source of sublime existence and values and an outer sheath of physical matter. Man, he said, is a microcosm of this system, capable of attaining the sublime inner state through ecstasy. He practiced and taught ahimsa, vegetarianism, karma, reincarnation and belief in Supreme Being as both immanent and transcendent. His writings, in six volumes, are called the Ennead. He was apparently familiar with Hindu wisdom through reading Life of Apollonius, a biography which narrated a young Greek renunciate's travels through India.

pluralism (pluralistic): Doctrine that holds existence to be composed of three or more distinct and irreducible components, such as God, souls and world. See: dvaita-advaita.

pluralistic realism: A term for pluralism used by various schools including Meykandar Saiva Siddhanta, emphasizing that the components of existence are absolutely real in themselves and not creations of consciousness or God.

polygamy: Practice of having more than one spouse.

polytheism: Belief in or worship of many Gods. See: monotheism.

pomp: A dignified or brilliant display. Splendor and pageantry.

pontifical: Having to do with pontiffs, or high priests. Having all the dignity, respect and influence of a spiritual leader endowed with great honor and authority. See: ordination, Shankaracharya pitha.

potent: Having power, authority. Effective, able.

potentialities: A state of latency, something that has power but is not developed or manifest, such as a talent yet to be matured.

pradakshina: (Sanskrit) "Moving rightward." Worshipful circumambulation, walking clockwise around the temple sanctum or other holy place, with the intention of shifting the mind from worldly concerns to awareness of the Divine. Clockwise has esoteric significance in that the chakras of muladhara and above spin clockwise, while those below spin counterclockwise, taking one down into the lower regions of selfishness, greed, conflict and turmoil.

pradosha: (Sanskrit) The auspicious 3-hour period, 1½ hours before and after sunset. Pradosha especially refers to this period on the 13th (trayodashi) tithi of each

fortnight, an optimum time of the month for meditation. Its observance, prepared for by fasting, is called pradosha vrata. See: fast, tithi.

pragmatic: Practical. Concerned with application, not theory or speculation.

prakriti: (Sanskrit) "Primary matter; nature." In the 25-tattva Sankhya system--which concerns itself only with the tangible spectrum of creation--prakriti, or pradhana, is one of two supreme beginningless realities: matter and spirit, prakriti and purusha, the female and male principles. Prakriti is the manifesting aspect, as contrasted with the quiescent unmanifest--purusha, which is pure consciousness. In Shaktism, prakriti, the active principle, is personified as Devi, the Goddess, and is synonymous with Maya. Prakriti is thus often seen, and depicted so in the Puranas, as the Divine Mother, whose love and care embrace and comfort all beings. In Saivite cosmology, prakriti is the 24th of 36 tattvas, the potentiality of the physical cosmos, the gross energy from which all lower tattvas are formed. Its three qualities are sattva, rajas and tamas. See: odic, purusha, tattva.

pralaya: (Sanskrit) "Dissolution, reabsorption; destruction; death." A synonym for samhara, one of the five functions of Siva. Also names the partial destruction or reabsorption of the cosmos at the end of each eon or kalpa. There are three kinds of periods of dissolution: 1) laya, at the end of a mahayuga, when the physical world is destroyed; 2) pralaya, at the end of a kalpa, when both the physical and subtle worlds are destroyed; and 3) mahapralaya at the end of a mahakalpa, when all three worlds (physical, subtle and causal) are absorbed into Siva. See: cosmic cycle, mahapralaya.

pramukha: (Sanskrit) "Turning the face toward." Head; foremost." Leader, guide; such as the family head, kutumba pramukha. See: joint family.

prana: (Sanskrit) Vital energy or life principle. Literally, "vital air," from the root pran, "to breathe." Prana in the human body moves in the pranamaya kosha as five primary life currents known as vayus, "vital airs or winds." These are prana (outgoing breath), apana (incoming breath), vyana (retained breath), udana (ascending breath) and samana (equalizing breath). Each governs crucial bodily functions, and all bodily energies are modifications of these. Usually prana refers to the life principle, but sometimes denotes energy, power or the animating force of the cosmos. See: kosha, tattva.

Pranagnihotra Upanishad: (Sanskrit) A minor Upanishad which explains how to transform the external ritual of the fire sacrifice into pranagnihotra, "the sacrifice offered in the prana fire" of one's own being.

Pranalinga: (Sanskrit) "Living mark." Personally experiencing God in the Sivalinga. A term used especially in Vira Saivism. See: Sivalinga, Vira Saivism.

pranamaya kosha: (Sanskrit) "Life-energy sheath." See: kosha, prana.

pranama: (Sanskrit) "Obeisance; bowing down." Reverent salutation in which the head or body is bowed. --**ashtanga pranama:** "Eight-limbed obeisance." The full prostration for men, in which the hands, chest, forehead, knees and feet touch the ground. (Same as shashtanga pranama.) --**panchanga pranama:** "Five-limbed obeisance." The woman's form of prostration, in which the hands, head and legs touch the ground (with the ankles crossed, right over the left). A more exacting term for prostration is pranipata, "falling down in obeisance." See: bhakti, namaskara, prapatti.

pranatyaga: (Sanskrit) "Abandoning life force." A term for suicide but without the connotation of violence expressed in the more common terms svadehaghata, "murdering one's body," and atmaghata, "self-murder." See: death, suicide.

Pranava: (Sanskrit) "Humming." The mantra Aum, denoting God as the Primal Sound. It can be heard as the sound of one's own nerve system, like the sound of an electrical transformer or a swarm of bees. The meditator is taught to inwardly transform this sound into the inner light which lights the thoughts, and bask in this blissful consciousness. Pranava is also known as the sound of the nadanadi shakti. See: Aum, Siva Consciousness.

pranayama: (Sanskrit) "Breath control." See: raja yoga.

pranic body: The subtle, life-giving sheath called pranamaya kosha. See: kosha.

prapatti: (Sanskrit) "Throwing oneself down." Bhakti--total, unconditional submission to God, often coupled with the attitude of personal helplessness, self-effacement and resignation. A term especially used in Vaishnavism to name a concept extremely central to virtually all Hindu schools. In Saiva Siddhanta, bhakti is all important in the development of the soul and its release into spiritual maturity. The doctrine is perhaps best expressed in the teachings of the four Samayacharya saints, who all shared a profound and mystical love of Siva marked by 1) deep humility and self-effacement, admission of sin and weakness; 2) total surrender in God as the only true refuge and 3) a relationship of lover and beloved known as bridal mysticism, in which the devotee is the bride and Siva the bridegroom. The practice of yoga, too, is an expression of love of God in Saiva Siddhanta, and it is only with God's grace that success is achieved. Rishi Tirumular states: "Unless your heart melts in the sweet ecstasy of love--my Lord, my treasure-trove, you can never possess" (Tirumantiram 272). It is in this concept of the need for self-effacement and total surrender, prapatti, that the members of all sects merge in oneness, at the fulfillment of their individual paths. Similarly, they all meet in unity at the beginning of the path with the worship of Lord Ganesha. See: bhakti, grace, pada, surrender.

prarabdha karma: (Sanskrit) "Action that has been unleashed or aroused." See: karma.

prasada: (Sanskrit) "Clarity, brightness; grace." 1) The virtue of serenity and graciousness. 2) Food offered to the Deity or the guru, or the blessed remnants of such food. 3) Any propitiatory offering. See: sacrament, Vira Saivism.

Prashna Upanishad: (Sanskrit) Belongs to the Atharva Veda and is divided into six sections addressing six questions asked of sage Pippalada by his disciples, regarding life, Realization and the mantra Aum.

prashnottaram: (Sanskrit) "Question-answer (prashna-uttaram)." A term used in Dancing with Siva for catechism, an interrogatory summation of religious doctrine.

Pratyabhijna: (Sanskrit) "Recognition or recollection," from "knowledge" (jnana) which "faces" (abhi) the knower and toward which he eventually "turns" (prati). A concept of Kashmir Saivism which denotes the devotee's recognition, as a result of the guru's grace, of the Truth that ever was--that Siva is indeed everywhere, and the soul is already united with Him.

Pratyabhijna Darshana: (Sanskrit) The philosophical name for Kashmir Saivism.

Pratyabhijna Sutra(s): (Sanskrit) A foundational Kashmir Saiva scripture, 190 sutras.

pratyahara: (Sanskrit) "Withdrawal." The drawing in of forces. In yoga, the withdrawal from external consciousness. (Also a synonym for pralaya.) See: raja yoga, mahapralaya, meditation.

prayashchitta: (Sanskrit) "Predominant thought or aim." Penance. Acts of atonement. See: penance, papa, punya.

prayojaka: (Sanskrit) "Facilitator; employer; manager." A person who instigates, promotes. Also a name for a coordinator of religious outreach activities and literature distribution.

prayopavesha: (Sanskrit) "Resolving to die through fasting." Self-willed death by fasting. See: death, suicide.

precede: To come before in time, importance, influence or rank.

precinct: An enclosed or delimited area. Also the grounds surrounding a religious edifice.

precursor: Forerunner. A person or thing that goes before.

Premaiva Sivamaya, Satyam eva Parasivah: (Sanskrit) "God Siva is immanent love and transcendent Reality." A Saivite Hindu affirmation of faith. See: affirmation.

prenatal: Existing or occurring before physical birth, or relating to the time before birth. See: samskaras of birth.

preservation: The act of maintaining or protecting. One of the five cosmic powers. See: Nataraja.

preside: To be chairman at a gathering, in a position of authority within a group. To have charge of; to dominate.

Pretaloka: (Sanskrit) "World of the departed." The realm of the earth-bound souls. This lower region of Bhuvanloka is an astral duplicate of the physical world. See: loka.

prevail: To be strong and victorious; overcome all obstacles. To exist widely.

Primal Soul: The uncreated, original, perfect soul--Siva Parameshvara--who emanates from Himself the inner and outer universes and an infinite plurality of individual souls whose essence is identical with His essence. God in His personal aspect as Lord and Creator, depicted in many forms: Nataraja by Saivites, Vishnu by Vaishnavites, Devi by Shaktas. See: Nataraja, Parameshvara.

Primal Sound: In Hinduism, sound is the first manifestation, even before light, in the creative scheme of things. The Primal Sound is also known as Pranava, the sound of the mula mantra, "Aum." See: sound.

Primal Substance: The fundamental energy and rarified form from which the manifest world in its infinite diversity is derived. See: Parashakti.

principle: An essential truth, law or rule upon which others are based.

pristine: Pure, unspoiled; original condition.

procreation: The process of begetting offspring.

procurer: Provider.

progeny: Offspring, children; descendants.

prohibit (prohibition): To forbid or prevent by authority.

prominent: Conspicuous, noticeable at once. Widely known.

promiscuity: The state or character of engaging in sex indiscriminantly or with many persons.

prone: Tending or inclined toward.

pronged: Having one or several pointed ends.

propel: To push, impel, or drive forward.

prophecy: Divination. Act or practice of predicting the future.

propound: To set forth. To put forward for consideration.

protocol: Customs of proper etiquette and ceremony, especially in relation to religious or political dignitaries.

protrude: To jut out or project.

province: Sphere, area or division.

prow: The forward part of a ship; any similar projecting or leading part.

prudent: Careful. Showing wisdom and good judgment in practical matters.

psalm: A sacred hymn, song or poem.

psychic: "Of the psyche or soul." Sensitive to spiritual processes and energies. Inwardly or intuitively aware of nonphysical realities; able to use powers such as clairvoyance, clairaudience and precognition. Nonphysical, subtle; pertaining to the deeper aspects of man. See: mysticism, odic.

puja: (Sanskrit) "Worship, adoration." An Agamic rite of worship performed in the home, temple or shrine, to the murti, sri paduka, or other consecrated object, or to a person, such as the satguru. Its inner purpose is to purify the atmosphere around the object worshiped, establish a connection with the inner worlds and invoke the presence of God, Gods or one's guru. During puja, the officiant (pujari) recites various chants praising the Divine and beseeching divine blessings, while making offerings in accordance with established traditions. Puja, the worship of a murti through water, lights and flowers in temples and shrines, is the Agamic counterpart of the Vedic yajna rite, in which offerings are conveyed through the sacred homa fire. These are the two great streams of adoration and communion in Hinduism. Central steps of puja include: 1) achamana, water sipping for purification; 2) Ganapati prarthana, prayers to Ganesha; 3) sankalpa, declaration of intent; 4) ghanta, ringing bell, inviting devas and dismissing asuras; 5) avahana, inviting the Deity ; 6) mantras and dhyana, meditating on the Deity; 7) svagata, welcoming; 8) namaskara, obeisance; 9) arghyam, water offerings; 10) pradakshina, circumambulation; 11) abhisheka, bathing the murti; 12) dhupa, incense-offering; 13) dipa, offering lights; 14) naivedya, offering food; 15) archana, chanting holy names; 16) arati, final offering

of lights; 17) prarthana, personal requests; 18) visarjana, dismissal-farewell. Also central are pranayama (breath control), guru vandana (adoration of the preceptor), nyasa (empowerment through touching) and mudra (mystic gestures). Puja offerings also include pushpa (flowers), arghya (water), tambula (betel leaf) and chandana (sandalpaste). --**atmartha puja:** Karana Agama, v. 2, states: Atmartha cha parartha cha puja dvididhamuchyate, "Worship is two-fold: for the benefit of oneself and for the benefit of others." Atmartha puja is done for oneself and immediate family, usually at home in a private shrine. --**parartha puja:** "Puja for others." Parartha puja is public puja, performed by authorized or ordained priests in a public shrine or temple. See: pujari, yajna.

pujari: (Sanskrit) "Worshiper." A general term for Hindu temple priests, as well as anyone performing puja. Pujari (sometimes pujari) is the Hindi form of the Sanskrit pujaka; pusari in Tamil. Archaka is another term for the officiant priest in the southern tradition. Purohita is a Smarta brahmin priest who specializes in domestic rites. See: puja.

pulsate: To beat or throb in rhythm, as the heart.

pundit: See: pundit.

punarjanma: (Sanskrit) "Reincarnation." From punah, "again and again," and janma, "taking birth." See: reincarnation.

Punjab: (Sanskrit) The area of ancient India between the Indus and Sutlej, below Kashmir. It is now divided between India and Pakistan. It was a center of Saivism until Muslim invasions. The modern Indian state is 19,445 square miles in area with a population of 18 million.

punsavana: (Sanskrit) "Male rite; bringing forth a male." Traditional sacrament performed during early pregnancy in prayer of a son. See: samskaras of birth.

punya: (Sanskrit) "Holy; virtuous; auspicious." 1) Good or righteous. 2) Meritorious action. 3) Merit earned through right thought, word and action. Punya includes all forms of doing good, from the simplest helpful deed to a lifetime of conscientious beneficence. Each act of punya carries its karmic consequence, karmaphala, "fruit of action"--the positive reward of actions, words and deeds that are in keeping with dharma. Awakened psychics who have developed clairvoyant sight can clearly see the punya accrued in the inner subconscious aura as a colorful, free-flowing, astral, light-energy, pranic substance. Punya is seen as light-hued, pastel colors, whereas its counterpart, papa, is seen as shades of darker colors which are usually static and immovable. These arrangements of the papa shades and punya hues are not unlike the free-expression paintings found in modern art. Punya colors produce inner contentment, deep joy, the feeling of security and fearlessness. Papa can be dissolved and punya created through penance (prayashchitta), austerity (tapas) and good

deeds (sukritya). Punya is earned through virtuous living, following the multi-faceted laws of dharma. Punya depends on purity of acts according to various factors including 1) the karma and evolution of the individual, 2) degree of sacrifice and unselfish motivation and 3) time and place. For example, virtuous deeds, sadhana, tapas and penance have greater merit when performed in holy places and at auspicious times. The Tirukural (105) states that "Help rendered another cannot be measured by the extent of the assistance given. Its true measure is the worth of the recipient." In other words, a small act done for a great and worthy soul carries more punya than even a large act performed for a lesser person. (Opposite of papa.) See: aura, karma, papa, penance.

Purana: (Sanskrit) "Ancient (lore)." Hindu folk narratives containing ethical and cosmological teachings relative to Gods, man and the world. They revolve around five subjects: primary creation, secondary creation, genealogy, cycles of time and history. There are 18 major Puranas which are designated as either Saivite, Vaishnavite or Shakta. See: folk narratives, mythology.

Pure Consciousness: See: Parashakti, Satchidananda, tattva.

purgatory: A state or place of temporary punishment or expiation. A hellish condition that is not eternal. Purgatory is actually more fitting than the term hell as an equivalent for the Sanskrit Naraka. See: hell, loka, Naraka.

puritan: A person who is overly strict or rigid regarding morals and religion.

purity-impurity: **Shaucha-ashaucha.** Purity and its opposite, pollution, are a fundamental part of Hindu culture. While they imply a strong sense of physical cleanliness, their more important meanings extend to social, ceremonial, mental, emotional, psychic and spiritual contamination. Freedom from all forms of contamination is a key to Hindu spirituality, and is one of the yamas. Physical purity requires a clean and well-ordered environment, yogic purging of the internal organs and frequent cleansing with water. Mental purity derives from meditation, right living and right thinking. Emotional purity depends on control of the mind, clearing the subconscious and keeping good company. Spiritual purity is achieved through following the yamas and niyamas, study of the Vedas and other scriptures, pilgrimage, meditation, japa, tapas and ahimsa. Ritual purity requires the observance of certain prayashchittas, or penances, for defilement derived from foreign travel, contact with base people or places, conversion to other faiths, contact with bodily wastes, attending a funeral, etc. Purity is of three forms--purity in mind, speech and body, or thought, word and deed. Purity is the pristine and natural state of the soul. Impurity, or pollution, is the obscuring of this state by adulterating experience and beclouding conceptions. In daily life, the Hindu strives to protect this innate purity by wise living, following the codes of dharma. This includes harnessing the sexual energies, associating with other virtuous Hindu devotees, never using harsh, angered

or indecent language, and keeping a clean and healthy physical body. See: dharma, papa, penance, punya, yama-niyama.

purnima: (Sanskrit) "Full." Full moon. See: Guru Purnima.

purohita: (Sanskrit) "Front-most; leader; family priest." A Smarta brahmin priest who specializes in home ceremonies. See: Smarta, pujari.

pursue (pursuit): To go with determination after a goal. To follow.

purusha: (Sanskrit) "The spirit that dwells in the body/in the universe." Person; spirit; man. Metaphysically, the soul, neither male nor female. Also used in Yoga and Sankhya for the transcendent Self. A synonym for atman. Purusha can also refer to the Supreme Being or Soul, as it sometimes does in the Upanishads. In the Rig Veda hymn "Purusha Sukta," Purusha is the cosmic man, having a thousand heads, a thousand eyes, a thousand feet and encompassing the earth, spreading in all directions into animate and inanimate things. In the Sankhya system, purusha is one of two supreme, beginningless realities: spirit and matter, purusha and prakriti, the male and female principles. It is the quiescent unmanifest, pure consciousness, contrasted with Prakriti, the manifesting, primal nature from which the cosmos unfolds. In Saiva cosmology, purusha is the 25th of 36 tattvas, one level subtler than prakriti. Beyond these lie the subtle realms of shuddha maya. Transcending all the tattvas is Parasiva. See: atman, jiva, prakriti, soul, tattva.

purusha dharma: (Sanskrit) "A man's code of duty and conduct." See: dharma.

purushartha: (Sanskrit) "Human wealth or purpose." The four pursuits in which humans may legitimately engage, also called chaturvarga, "four-fold good"--a basic principle of Hindu ethics. --**dharma:** "Righteous living." The fulfillment of virtue, good works, duties and responsibilities, restraints and observances--performing one's part in the service and upliftment of society. This includes pursuit of truth under a guru of a particular parampara and sampradaya. Dharma is of four primary forms. It is the steady guide for artha and kama. See: dharma. --**artha:** "Wealth." Material welfare and abundance, money, property, possessions. Artha is the pursuit of wealth, guided by dharma. It includes the basic needs--food, money, clothing and shelter--and extends to the wealth required to maintain a comfortable home, raise a family, fulfill a successful career and perform religious duties. The broadest concept of wealth embraces financial independence, freedom from debt, worthy children, good friends, leisure time, faithful servants, trustworthy employees, and the joys of giving, including tithing (dashamamsha), feeding the poor, supporting religious mendicants, worshiping devoutly, protecting all creatures, upholding the family and offering hospitality to guests. Artha measures not only riches but quality of life, providing the personal and social security needed to pursue kama, dharma and moksha. It allows for the fulfillment of the householder's five daily sacrifices, pancha mahayajna: to God, ancestors, devas, creatures and men. See: yajna. --**kama:**

"Pleasure, love; enjoyment." Earthly love, aesthetic and cultural fulfillment, pleasures of the world (including sexual), the joys of family, intellectual satisfaction. Enjoyment of happiness, security, creativity, usefulness and inspiration. See: Kama Sutras. --**moksha**: "Liberation." Freedom from rebirth through the ultimate attainment, realization of the Self God, Parasiva. The spiritual attainments and superconscious joys, attending renunciation and yoga leading to Self Realization. Moksha comes through the fulfillment of dharma, artha and kama (known in Tamil as aram, porul and inbam, and explained by Tiruvalluvar in Tirukural) in the current or past lives, so that one is no longer attached to worldly joys or sorrows. It is the supreme goal of life, called paramartha. See: liberation, moksha.

Q

qualified nondualism: See: Vishishtadvaita.

quantum: Quantity or amount. In science's quantum theory: a fixed basic unit, usually of energy. --**quantum particles of light**: Light understood not as a continuum, but as traveling bundles each of a same intensity. Deeper still, these particles originate and resolve themselves in a one divine energy. --**at the quantum level (of the mind)**: Deep within the mind, at a subtle energy level. See: apex of creation, microcosm-macrocosm, tattva.

quell: To put an end to, subdue or make quiet.

R

race: Technically speaking, each of the five races of man (Caucasoid, Congoid, Mongoloid, Australoid and Capoid) is a Homo sapiens subspecies. A subspecies is a branch showing slight but significant differences from another branch living in a different area. Few traits are unique to any one race. It is the combination of several traits that indicate racial identity. Accurate race determination can be made by blood analysis or by measuring and comparing certain body dimensions. Ninety-eight percent of all Hindus belong to the Caucasoid race. There are also large numbers of Hindu Mongoloids in Nepal and Assam and some Australoids, such as the Gond and Bhil tribes of India. North and South Indians are among Earth's 2.5 billion Caucasoids, whose traits include straight to wavy hair, thin lips, small to medium teeth, blue to dark brown eyes and a high incident of A2-Rh and Gm blood genes. Skin color, often erroneously attached to the idea of race, is now known to be adaptation to climate: over generations, people in northern climates have developed lighter complexions than their southern brothers.

Radhakrishnan, Dr. S.: (Sanskrit) (1888-1975) A President of India (1962 to 1967), an outstanding philosopher, prolific writer, compelling speaker and effective spokesman of Hinduism. Along with Vivekananda, Tagore, Aurobindo and others, he helped bring about the current Hindu revival. He made Hinduism better known and appreciated at home and abroad, especially in the intellectual world. He was a foremost proponent of panentheism. See: Vedanta.

rage: Uncontrolled anger. Fuming fit of fury. See: vitala chakra.

Rahu: (Sanskrit) "The seizer." In Hindu astrology, Rahu is one of the nine important planets (graha), but is an invisible or "astral" one, along with its counterpart, Ketu. Physically speaking, it is one of two points in the heavens where the moon crosses the ecliptic or path of the sun. The point where the moon crosses the ecliptic moving from south to north is Rahu, the north node. The south node is Ketu. Rahu and Ketu are depicted as a serpent demon who encircles the earth. Ketu is the dragon's tail and Rahu is the head. Both are believed to cause general consternation among people. See: jyotisha.

rajanya: (Sanskrit) "Ruling." A synonym for kshatriya. See: varna dharma.

rajas: (Sanskrit) "Passion; activity." See: guna.

raja yoga: (Sanskrit) "King of yogas." Also known as ashtanga yoga, "eight-limbed yoga." The classical yoga system of eight progressive stages to Illumination as described in various yoga Upanishads, the Tirumantiram and, most notably, the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali. The eight limbs are as follows. 1) --**yama:** "Restraint." Virtuous and moral living, which brings purity of mind, freedom from anger,

jealousy and subconscious confusion which would inhibit the process of meditation. 2) --**niyama**: (Sanskrit) "Observance." Religious practices which cultivate the qualities of the higher nature, such as devotion, cognition, humility and contentment--giving the refinement of nature and control of mind needed to concentrate and ultimately plunge into samadhi. 3) --**asana**: "Seat or posture." A sound body is needed for success in meditation. This is attained through hatha yoga, the postures of which balance the energies of mind and body, promoting health and serenity, e.g., padmasana, the "lotus pose," for meditation. The Yoga Sutras indicate that asanas make the yogi impervious to the impact of the pairs of opposites (dvandva), heat-cold, etc. 4) --**pranayama**: "Mastering life force." Breath control, which quiets the chitta and balances ida and pingala. Science of controlling prana through breathing techniques in which lengths of inhalation, retention and exhalation are modulated. Pranayama prepares the mind for deep meditation. 5) --**pratyahara**: "Withdrawal." The practice of withdrawing consciousness from the physical senses first, such as not hearing noise while meditating, then progressively receding from emotions, intellect and eventually from individual consciousness itself in order to merge into the Universal. 6) --**dharana**: "Concentration." Focusing the mind on a single object or line of thought, not allowing it to wander. The guiding of the flow of consciousness. When concentration is sustained long and deeply enough, meditation naturally follows. 7) --**dhyana**: "Meditation." A quiet, alert, powerfully concentrated state wherein new knowledge and insight pour into the field of consciousness. This state is possible once the subconscious mind has been cleared or quieted. 8) --**samadhi**: "Enstasy," which means "standing within one's self." "Sameness, contemplation." The state of true yoga, in which the meditator and the object of meditation are one. See: asana, samadhi, yoga.

Rama: (Sanskrit) Venerated hero of the Ramayana epic, and one of the two most popular incarnations of Vishnu, along with Krishna. His worship is almost universal among Vaishnavas, and extensive among Smartas and other liberal Hindus. He was a great worshiper of Siva, and a Siva temple, called Rameshvaram, was built in his name at the southern tip of India.

Ramakantha I: (Sanskrit) A great exponent of Saiva Siddhanta, ca 950. In the lineage of Aghorasiva.

Ramakantha II: (Sanskrit) Great exponent of Saiva Siddhanta, ca 1150. Aghorasiva's teacher.

Ramakrishna: (Sanskrit) (1836-1886) One of the great saints and mystics of modern Hinduism, a champion and exemplar of monistic theism--fervent devotee of Mother Kali and staunch monist who taught oneness and the pursuit of nirvikalpa samadhi, realization of the Absolute. He was guru to the great Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902), who internationalized Hindu thought and philosophy.

Ramanuja: (Sanskrit) Philosopher (1017-1137), saint, great bhakta, founder of one of five major Vaishnava schools, and considered the greatest critic of advaita. In his famous Sri Bhashya on the Brahma Sutras, he countered Shankara's absolute monism point-by-point with his qualified monism, called Vishishtadvaita Vedanta. See: shad darshana, Vedanta.

Ramaraja: (Sanskrit) (1478-1565). The last king of South India's Vijayanagara empire.

Ramayana: (Sanskrit) "Vehicle of Rama." One of India's two grand epics (Itihasa) along with the Mahabharata. It is Valmiki's tragic love story of Rama and Sita, whose exemplary lives have helped set high standards of dignity and nobility as an integral part of Hindu dharma. Astronomical data in the story puts Rama's reign at about 2015 bce. See: Rama.

Ramprasad: (Sanskrit) Great Bengali devotional saint-poet (1718-1775) who wrote hymns to Shakti.

rasatala: (Sanskrit) "Subterranean region." The fifth chakra below the muladhara, centered in the ankles. Corresponds to the fifth astral netherworld beneath the earth's surface, called Rijisha ("expelled") or Rasatala. Region of selfishness, self-centeredness and possessiveness. Rasa means "earth, soil; moisture." See: chakra, loka, Naraka.

rationalize: To excuse through reason. To make plausible explanations for.

Raurava Agama: (Sanskrit) Among the 28 Saiva Siddhanta Agamas, this scripture was conveyed by Lord Siva to sage Ruru (hence the name). Its extensive kriya pada section details the structure of the Siva temple and its annexes.

Ravana: (Sanskrit) Villain of the Ramayana epic. A legendary king of Sri Lanka, adversary of Rama, eventually defeated by Rama and his armies.

reabsorption (reabsorb): Taking in again, as water is squeezed from and then drawn back into a sponge. See: cosmic cycle, mahapralaya, pralaya.

reaction: A response to an action.

reaffirmation: A new affirming or a declaration about a thing as being true or still pertinent. See: affirmation.

reality: See: Absolute Reality, relative.

realm: A kingdom, region or area. See: loka.

reap: To cut for harvest. To gain as a result of actions or effort.

rebellious: Resisting authority or any form of control.

rebound: To bounce back.

recluse: A person who retreats from the world and lives in seclusion.

reconcile (reconciliation): To settle or resolve, as a dispute. To make consistent or compatible, e.g., two conflicting ideas.

redeem: To recover, to set free from penalty or deliver from sin. --**redemption:** Act of redeeming. See: absolution, penance.

reembody: To come into a body again. To reincarnate.

reincarnation: "Re-entering the flesh." Punarjanma; metempsychosis. The process wherein souls take on a physical body through the birth process. Reincarnation is one of the fundamental principles of Hindu spiritual insight, shared by the mystical schools of nearly all religions, including Jainism, Sikhism, Buddhism (and even by Christianity until it was cast out by the Nicene Council in 787). It is against the backdrop of this principle of the soul's enjoying many lives that other aspects of Hinduism can be understood. It is a repetitive cycle, known as punarjanma, which originates in the subtle plane (Antarloka), the realm in which souls live between births and return to after death. Here they are assisted in readjusting to the "in-between" world and eventually prepared for yet another birth. The quality and nature of the birth depends on the merit or demerit of their past actions (karma) and on the needs of their unique pattern of development and experience (dharma). The mother, the father and the soul together create a new body for the soul. At the moment of conception, the soul connects with and is irrevocably bound to the embryo. As soon as the egg is fertilized, the process of human life begins. It is during the mid-term of pregnancy that the full humanness of the fetus is achieved and the soul fully inhabits the new body, a stage which is acknowledged when the child begins to move and kick within the mother's womb. (Tirumantiram, 460: "There in the pregnant womb, the soul lay in primordial quiescence [turiya] state. From that state, Maya [or Prakriti] and Her tribe aroused it and conferred consciousness and maya's evolutes eight--desires and the rest. Thus say scriptures holy and true.") Finally, at birth the soul emerges into earth consciousness, veiled of all memory of past lives and the inner worlds. The cycle of reincarnation ends when karma has been resolved and the Self God (Parasiva) has been realized. This condition of release is called moksha. Then the soul continues to evolve and mature, but without the need to return to physical existence. How many earthly births must one have to attain the unattainable? Many thousands to be sure, hastened by righteous living, tapas, austerities on all levels, penance and good deeds in abundance. See: evolution of the soul, karma, moksha, nonhuman birth, samsara, soul.

relative: Quality or object which is meaningful only in relation to something else. Not absolute. --**relative reality:** Maya. That which is ever changing and changeable. Describes the nature of manifest existence, indicating that it is not an illusion but is also not Absolute Reality, which is eternal and unchanging. See: Absolute Reality, maya.

religion: From Latin religare, "to bind back." Any system of belief in and worship of suprahuman beings or powers and/or of a Supreme Being or Power. Religion is a structured vehicle for soul advancement which often includes theology, scripture, spiritual and moral practices, priesthood and liturgy. See: Hinduism.

relinquish: To give up, let go of or abandon. See: sacrifice, tyaga.

remorse: Deep, painful regret or guilt over a wrong one has done. Moral anguish. See: absolution, hri, penance.

remote: Distant, secluded; hidden away or difficult to reach.

renaissance: "Rebirth or new birth." A renewal, revival or reawakening.

render: To cause to be or to become.

renowned: Famous.

renunciation: See: sannyasa, tyaga, vairagya.

Renukacharya: (Sanskrit) A Vira Saiva philosopher and saint.

replenish: To fill up or cause to be full again.

repose: To rest peacefully. --**to repose in one's realization:** To cease outward activity and enjoy communion with the Divine.

repudiation: The act of publicly rejecting a thing, habit or way of being.

rescind: To cancel or revoke.

resemble: To look like, or have similar traits and qualities.

resent (resentment): A feeling of ill-will, indignation or hostility from a sense of having been wronged.

residue: Remainder. That which is left over after a process.

resplendence: Radiance; brilliance.

restive: Nervous, unruly, eager to go forward; hard to control.

restraints: See: yama-niyama.

retaliation: Paying back an injury, returning like for like, hurt for hurt. Getting even; vengeance.

revealing grace: See: anugraha shakti, grace.

rigorous: Very strict or severe.

Rig Veda: (Sanskrit) "Veda of verse (rik)." The first and oldest of the four Veda compendia of revealed scriptures (shruti), including a hymn collection (Samhita), priestly explanatory manuals (Brahmanas), forest treatises (Aranyakas) elaborating on the Vedic rites, and philosophical dialogs (Upanishads). Like the other Vedas, the Rig Veda was brought to earth consciousness not all at once, but gradually, over a period of perhaps several thousand years. The oldest and core portion is the Samhita, believed to date back, in its oral form, as far as 8,000 years, and to have been written down in archaic Sanskrit some 3,000 years ago. It consists of more than 10,000 verses, averaging three or four lines (riks), forming 1,028 hymns (suktas), organized in ten books called mandalas. It embodies prayerful hymns of praise and invocation to the Divinities of nature and to the One Divine. They are the spiritual reflections of a pastoral people with a profound awe for the powers of nature, each of which they revered as sacred and alive. The rishis who unfolded these outpourings of adoration perceived a well-ordered cosmos in which dharma is the way of attunement with celestial worlds, from which all righteousness and prosperity descends. The main concern is man's relationship with God and the world, and the invocation of the subtle worlds into mundane existence. Prayers beseech the Gods for happy family life, wealth, pleasure, cattle, health, protection from enemies, strength in battle, matrimony, progeny, long life and happiness, wisdom and realization and final liberation from rebirth. The Rig Veda Samhita, which in length equals Homer's Iliad and Odyssey combined, is the most important hymn collection, for it lends a large number of its hymns to the other three Veda Samhitas (the Sama, Yajur and Atharva). Chronologically, after the Samhitas came the Brahmanas, followed by the Aranyakas, and finally the Upanishads, also called the Vedanta, meaning "Veda's end." See: shruti, Vedas.

rishi: (Sanskrit) "Seer." A term for an enlightened being, emphasizing psychic perception and visionary wisdom. In the Vedic age, rishis lived in forest or mountain retreats, either alone or with disciples. These rishis were great souls who were the inspired conveyers of the Vedas. Seven particular rishis (the sapta-rishis) mentioned in the Rig Veda are said to still guide mankind from the inner worlds. See: shruti.

rita: (Sanskrit) "Sacred order, cosmic law; truth." See: dharma.

rite (or ritual): A religious ceremony. See: sacrament, sacrifice, samskara.

rites of passage: Sacraments marking crucial stages of life. See: samskara.

ritukala: (Sanskrit) "Fit or proper season." Time of menses. A traditional ceremony marking a young lady's coming of age. Ritu also carries the meaning of "fertile time." See: samskaras of adulthood.

Rudra: (Sanskrit) "Controller of awesome powers;" or "red, shining one." The name of Siva as the God of dissolution, the universal force of reabsorption. Rudra-Siva is revered both as the "terrifying one" and the "lord of tears," for He wields and controls the terrific powers which may cause lamentation among humans. See: Nataraja.

rudraksha: (Sanskrit) "Eye of Rudra;" or "red-eyed." From rud, "to cry," and aksha, meaning "eye." Marble-sized, multi-faced, reddish-brown seeds from the Eleocarpus ganitrus, or blue marble tree, which are sacred to Siva and a symbol of His compassion for humanity. Garlands, rudraksha mala, of larger seeds are worn around the neck by monks; and nonmonastics, both men and women, often wear a single bead on a cord at the throat. Smaller beads (usually numbering 108) are strung together for japa (recitation). Indian legend records that God shed a tear when looking down upon the sorrowful plight of humanity. That tear fell to Earth and from it grew the first rudraksha tree. Thus its seeds are worn by Hindus as a symbol of Siva's love and compassion. See: japa, mantra.

Rudrashambhu: (Sanskrit) Principal guru in the Amardaka order of Saiva monastics, about 775 in Ujjain, one of Saivism's holiest cities. The sect served as advisors to the king until Muslim domination around 1300.

Rudrayamala Tantra: (Sanskrit) Little known text dealing with worship.

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sacrament: 1) Holy rite, especially one solemnized in a formal, consecrated manner which is a bonding between the recipient and God, Gods or guru. This includes rites of passage (samskara), ceremonies sanctifying crucial events or stages of life. 2) Prasada. Sacred substances, grace-filled gifts, blessed in sacred ceremony or by a holy person. See: prasada, samskara.

sacred thread: Yajnopavita. See: upanayana.

sacrifice: Yajna. 1) Making offerings to a Deity as an expression of homage and devotion. 2) Giving up something, often one's own possession, advantage or preference, to serve a higher purpose. The literal meaning of sacrifice is "to make sacred," implying an act of worship. It is the most common translation of the term yajna, from the verb yuj, "to worship." In Hinduism, all of life is a sacrifice--called jivayajna, a giving of oneself--through which comes true spiritual fulfillment. Tyaga, the power of detachment, is an essential quality of true sacrifice. See: tyaga, yajna.

sadachara: (Sanskrit) "Good conduct; virtue, morality." It is embodied in the principles of dharma. See: dharma, yama-niyama, pada.

Sadasiva: (Sanskrit) "Ever-auspicious." A name of the Primal Soul, Siva, a synonym for Parameshvara, which is expressed in the physical being of the satguru. Sadasiva especially denotes the power of revealing grace, anugraha shakti, the third tattva, after which emerge Siva's other four divine powers. This five-fold manifestation or expression of God's activity in the cosmos is depicted in Hindu mantras, literature and art as the five-faced Sadasivamurti. Looking upward is Ishana, "ruler" (the power of revealment). Facing east is Tatpuruasha, "supreme soul" (the power of obscuration). Westward-looking is Sadyojata, "quickly birthing" (the power of creation). Northward is Vamadeva, "lovely, pleasing" (the power of preservation). Southward is Aghora, "nonterrifying" (the power of reabsorption). The first four faces revealed the Vedas. The fifth face, Ishana, revealed the Agamas. These five are also called Sadasiva, the revealer; Maheshvara, the obscurer; Brahma, the creator; Vishnu, the preserver; and Rudra, the destroyer. See: Parameshvara, tattva.

sadhaka: (Sanskrit) From sadh, "going straight to the goal." A spiritual aspirant; a devotee who performs sadhana. A serious seeker who has undertaken spiritual disciplines, is usually celibate and under the guidance of a guru. He wears white and may be under simple vows, but is not a yogi or sannyasin. See: sadhana.

sadhana marga: (Sanskrit) "The way of sadhana." A term used by Sage Yogaswami to name his prescription for seekers of Truth--a path of intense effort, spiritual discipline and consistent inner transformation, as opposed to theoretical and intellectual learning. See: mysticism, pada, sadhana, spiritual unfoldment.

sadhana: (Sanskrit) "Means of attainment." Self-effort, spiritual discipline; the way." Religious or spiritual disciplines, such as puja, yoga, meditation, japa, fasting and austerity. The effect of sadhana is the building of willpower, faith and confidence in oneself and in God, Gods and guru. The effect of sadhana is the building of willpower, faith and confidence in oneself and in God, Gods and guru. Sadhana harnesses and transmutes the instinctive-intellectual nature, allowing progressive spiritual unfoldment into the superconscious realizations and innate abilities of the soul. See: purity-impurity, pada, raja yoga, sadhana marga, spiritual unfoldment.

sadhu: (Sanskrit) "Virtuous one; straight, unerring." A holy man dedicated to the search for God. A sadhu may or may not be a yogi or a sannyasin, or be connected in any way with a guru or legitimate lineage. Sadhus usually have no fixed abode and travel unattached from place to place, often living on alms. There are countless sadhus on the roads, byways, mountains, riverbanks, and in the ashramas and caves of India. They have, by their very existence, a profound, stabilizing effect on the consciousness of India and the world. See: vairagi.

sadhvi: (Sanskrit) Feminine counterpart of sadhu. See: sadhu.

Saguna Brahman: (Sanskrit) "God with qualities." The Personal Lord. See: Brahman, Parameshvara.

sahasra lekhana sadhana: (Sanskrit) "Thousand-times writing discipline." The spiritual practice of writing a sacred mantra 1,008 times.

sahasrara chakra: (Sanskrit) "Thousand-spoked wheel." The cranial psychic force center. See: chakra.

Saiva Agamas: (Sanskrit) The sectarian revealed scriptures of the Saivas. Strongly theistic, they identify Siva as the Supreme Lord, immanent and transcendent. They are in two main divisions: the 64 Kashmir Saiva Agamas and the 28 Saiva Siddhanta Agamas. The latter group are the fundamental sectarian scriptures of Saiva Siddhanta. Of these, ten are of the Sivabheda division and are considered dualistic: 1) Kamika, 2) Yogaja, 3) Chintya, 4) Karana, 5) Ajita, 6) Dipta, 7) Sukshma, 8) Sahasraka, 9) Amshumat and 10) Suprabheda. There are 18 in the Rudrabheda group, classed as dual-nondual: 11) Vijaya, 12) Nihshvasa, 13) Svayambhuva, 14) Anala, 15) Vira (Bhadra), 16) Raurava, 17) Makuta, 18) Vimala, 19) Chandrajnana (or Chandrasahasa), 20) Mukhabimba (or Bimba), 21) Prodigita (or Udgita), 22) Lalita, 23) Siddha, 24) Santana, 25) Sarvokta (Narasimha), 26) Parameshvara, 27) Kirana and 28) Vatula (or Parahita). Rishi Tirumular, in his Tirumantiram, refers to 28 Agamas and mentions nine by name. Eight of these--Karana, Kamika, Vira, Chintya, Vatula, Vimala, Suprabheda and Makuta--are in the above list of 28 furnished by the French Institute of Indology, Pondicherry. The ninth, Kalottara, is presently regarded as an Upagama, or secondary text, of Vatula. The Kamika is the Agama most widely followed in Tamil Saiva temples, because of the availability of Aghorasiva's manual-

commentary (paddhati) on it. Vira Saivites especially refer to the Vatula and Vira Agamas. The Saiva Agama scriptures, above all else, are the connecting strand through all the schools of Saivism. The Agamas themselves express that they are entirely consistent with the teachings of the Veda, that they contain the essence of the Veda, and must be studied with the same high degree of devotion. See: Agamas, Vedas.

Saiva: (Sanskrit) "Auspicious." Of or relating to Saivism or its adherents, of whom there are about 400 million in the world today. Same as Saivite. See: Saivism.

Saiva Siddhanta: (Sanskrit) "Final conclusions of Saivism." The most widespread and influential Saivite school today, predominant especially among the Tamil people in Sri Lanka and South India. It is the formalized theology of the divine revelations contained in the twenty-eight Saiva Agamas. The first known guru of the Shuddha ("pure") Saiva Siddhanta tradition was Maharishi Nandinatha of Kashmir (ca bce 250), recorded in Panini's book of grammar as the teacher of rishis Patanjali, Vyaghrapada and Vasishtha. Other sacred scriptures include the Tirumantiram and the voluminous collection of devotional hymns, the Tirumurai, and the masterpiece on ethics and statecraft, the Tirukural. For Saiva Siddhantins, Siva is the totality of all, understood in three perfections: Parameshvara (the Personal Creator Lord), Parashakti (the substratum of form) and Parasiva (Absolute Reality which transcends all). Souls and world are identical in essence with Siva, yet also differ in that they are evolving. A pluralistic stream arose in the middle ages from the teachings of Aghorasiva and Meykandar. For Aghorasiva's school (ca 1150) Siva is not the material cause of the universe, and the soul attains perfect "sameness" with Siva upon liberation. Meykandar's (ca 1250) pluralistic school denies that souls ever attain perfect sameness or unity with Siva. See: Saivism.

Saiva Vishishtadvaita: (Sanskrit) The philosophy of Siva Advaita. See: Siva Advaita.

Saivism (Saiva): (Sanskrit) The religion followed by those who worship Siva as supreme God. Oldest of the four sects of Hinduism. The earliest historical evidence of Saivism is from the 8,000-year-old Indus Valley civilization in the form of the famous seal of Siva as Lord Pashupati, seated in a yogic pose. In the Ramayana, Lord Rama worshiped Siva, as did his rival Ravana. Buddha in 624 bce was born into a Saivite family, and records of his time speak of the Saiva ascetics who wandered the hills looking much as they do today. There are many schools of Saivism, six of which are Saiva Shiddhanta, Pashupata Saivism, Kashmir Saivism, Vira Saivism, Siddha Siddhanta and Siva Advaita. They are based firmly on the Vedas and Saiva Agamas, and thus have much in common, including the following principle doctrines: 1) the five powers of Siva--creation, preservation, destruction, revealing and concealing grace; 2) The three categories: Pati, pashu and pasha ("God, souls and bonds"); 3) the three bonds: anava, karma and maya; 4) the three-fold power of Siva: iccha shakti, kriya shakti and jnana shakti; 5) the thirty-six tattvas, or categories of

existence; 6) the need for initiation from a satguru; 7) the power of mantra; 8) the four padas (stages): charya (selfless service), kriya (devotion), yoga (meditation), and jnana (illumination); 9) the belief in the Panchakshara as the foremost mantra, and in rudraksha and vibhuti as sacred aids to faith; 10) the beliefs in satguru (preceptor), Sivalinga (object of worship) and sangama (company of holy persons). See: individual school entries, Saivism (six schools).

Saivism (six schools): Through history Saivism has developed a vast array of lineages. Philosophically, six schools are most notable: Saiva Siddhanta, Pashupata Saivism, Kashmir Saivism, Vira Saivism, Siddha Siddhanta and Siva Advaita. Saiva Siddhanta first distinguished itself in the second century bce through the masterful treatise of a Himalayan pilgrim to South India, Rishi Tirumular. It is Saivism's most widespread and influential school. Pashupata Saivism emerged in the Himalayan hills over 25 centuries ago. Ancient writings chronicle it as a Siva ascetic yoga path whose most renowned guru was Lakulisha. Kashmir Saivism, a strongly monistic lineage, arose from the revelatory aphorisms of Sri Vasugupta in the tenth century. Vira Saivism took shape in India's Karnataka state in the 12th-century under the inspiration of Sri Basavanna. It is a dynamic, reformist sect, rejecting religious complexity and stressing each devotee's personal relationship with God. Siddha Siddhanta, also known as Gorakshanatha Saivism, takes its name from the writings of the powerful 10th-century yogi, Sri Gorakshanatha, whose techniques for Siva identity attracted a large monastic and householder following in North India and Nepal. Siva Advaita is a Saivite interpretation of the Vedanta Sutras, based on the writings of Srikantha, a 12th-century scholar who sought to reconcile the Upanishads with the Agamas. See: individual school entries.

Saivite (Saiva): (Sanskrit) Of or relating to Saivism or its adherents, of whom there are about 400 million in the world today. See: Hinduism, Saivism.

sakha marga: (Sanskrit) "Friend's path." See: attainment, pada.

sakshin: (Sanskrit) "Witness." Awareness, the witness consciousness of the soul. Known as nef in the mystical Natha language of Shum. See: awareness, consciousness (individual), chit, Shum, soul.

Sama Veda: (Sanskrit) "Song of wisdom." Third of the four Vedas. Ninety percent of its 1,875 stanzas are derived from the Rig Veda. It is a collection of hymns specially arranged and notated for chanting with a distinctive melody and cadence by the Udgata priests during yajna, fire ceremony, together with stanzas from the Yajur Veda. This Veda forms the oldest known form of Indian music. See: Shruti, Vedas.

samadhi: (Sanskrit) "Enstasy," which means "standing within one's Self." "Sameness; contemplation; union, wholeness; completion, accomplishment." Samadhi is the state of true yoga, in which the meditator and the object of meditation are one. Samadhi is of two levels. The first is savikalpa samadhi ("enstasy with form

or seed"), identification or oneness with the essence of an object. Its highest form is the realization of the primal substratum or pure consciousness, Satchidananda. The second is nirvikalpa samadhi ("enstasy without form or seed"), identification with the Self, in which all modes of consciousness are transcended and Absolute Reality, Parasiva, beyond time, form and space, is experienced. This brings in its aftermath a complete transformation of consciousness. In Classical Yoga, nirvikalpa samadhi is known as asamprajnata samadhi, "supraconscious enstasy"--samadhi, or beingness, without thought or cognition, prajna. Savikalpa samadhi is also called samprajnata samadhi, "conscious enstasy." (Note that samadhi differs from samyama--the continuous meditation on a single subject or mystic key [such as a chakra] to gain revelation on a particular subject or area of consciousness. As explained by Patanjali, samyama consists of dharana, dhyana and samadhi.) See: enstasy, kundalini, Parasiva, raja yoga, samarasa, Satchidananda, Self Realization, trance.

samarasa: (Sanskrit) "Even essence" or "same taste." In Siddha Siddhanta, a term describing the state attained by a yogi in which he consciously experiences the world and daily life while never losing his perspective of the essential unity of God, soul and world. Similar in concept to sayujya samadhi. See: jnana, kaivalya, samadhi, Siddha Siddhanta, Sivasayujya.

samavartana: (Sanskrit) "Returning home." The ceremony marking a youth's completion of Vedic studies. See: samskaras.

Sambandar: (Tamil) Child saint of the 7th-century Saivite renaissance. Composed many Devaram hymns in praise of Siva, reconverted at least one Tamil king who had embraced Jainism, and vehemently sought to counter the incursion of Buddhism, bringing the Tamil people back to Saivism. See: Nalvar, Nayanar, Tirumurai.

samhara: (Sanskrit) "Dissolution; destruction." See: mahapralaya, Nataraja.

samhita: (Sanskrit) "Collection." 1) Any methodically arranged collection of texts or verses. 2) The hymn collection of each of the four Vedas. 3) A common alternate term for Vaishnava Agamas. See: Vedas.

sampradaya: (Sanskrit) "Tradition," "transmission;" a philosophical or religious doctrine or lineage. A living stream of tradition or theology within Hinduism, passed on by oral training and initiation. The term derives from the verb samprada, meaning "gift, grant, bestowing or conferring; handing down by tradition; bequeathing." Sampradaya is thus a philosophy borne down through history by verbal transmission. It is more inclusive than the related term parampara which names a living lineage of ordained gurus who embody and carry forth a sampradaya. A sampradaya may be represented by many paramparas. See: parampara.

samsara: (Sanskrit) "Flow." The phenomenal world. Transmigratory existence, fraught with impermanence and change. The cycle of birth, death and rebirth; the

total pattern of successive earthly lives experienced by a soul. A term similar to punarjanma (reincarnation), but with broader connotations. See: evolution of the soul, karma, punarjanma, reincarnation.

samsari: (Sanskrit) "One in samsara; wanderer." A soul during transmigration, immersed in or attached to mundane existence, hence not striving for liberation (moksha). A samsari is someone who is not "on the path." See: materialism, samsara, San Marga, worldly.

samskara: (Sanskrit) "Impression, activator; sanctification, preparation." 1) The imprints left on the subconscious mind by experience (from this or previous lives), which then color all of life, one's nature, responses, states of mind, etc. 2) A sacrament or rite done to mark a significant transition of life. These make deep and positive impressions on the mind of the recipient, inform the family and community of changes in the lives of its members and secure inner-world blessings. The numerous samskaras are outlined in the Grihya Shastras. Most are accompanied by specific mantras from the Vedas. See: mind (five states), sacrament.

samskaras of birth: From the rite of conception to the blessings of the new-born child. --**garbhadhana:** "Womb-placing." Rite of conception, where physical union is consecrated with the intent of bringing into physical birth an advanced soul. --**punsavana:** (Sanskrit) "Male rite; bringing forth a male." A rite performed during the third month of pregnancy consisting of prayers for a son and for the well-being of mother and child. A custom, found in all societies, based on the need for men to defend the country, run the family business and support the parents in old age. The need for male children in such societies is also based on the fact that women outlive men and leave the family to join their husband's family. --**simantonnayana:** "Hair-parting." A ceremony held between the fourth and seventh months in which the husband combs his wife's hair and expresses his love and support. --**jatakarma:** "Rite of birth." The father welcomes and blesses the new-born child and feeds it a taste of ghee and honey. See: samskara.

samskaras of childhood: From naming to education. --**namakarana:** "Name-giving" and formal entry into one or another sect of Hinduism, performed 11 to 41 days after birth. The name is chosen according to astrology, preferably the name of a God or Goddess. At this time, guardian devas are assigned to see the child through life. One who converts to or adopts Hinduism later in life would receive this same sacrament. --**annaprashana:** (Sanskrit) "Feeding." The ceremony marking the first taking of solid food, held at about six months. (Breast-feeding generally continues). --**karnavedha:** "Ear-piercing." The piercing of both ears, for boys and girls, and the inserting of gold earrings, held during the first, third or fifth year. See: earrings. --**chudakarana:** (Sanskrit) "Head-shaving." The shaving of the head, for boys and girls, between the 31st day and the fourth year. --**vidyarambha:** (Sanskrit) Marks the beginning of formal education. The boy or girl ceremoniously writes his/her first letter of the alphabet in a tray of uncooked rice. --**upanayana:** Given to boys at

about 12 years of age, marks the beginning of the period of brahmacharya and formal study of scripture and sacred lore, usually with an acharya or guru. --**samavartana**: Marks the end of formal religious study. See: samskara.

samskaras of adulthood: From coming-of-age to marriage. --**ritukala**: (Sanskrit) "Fit or proper season." Time of menses. A home blessing marking the coming of age for girls. --**keshanta**: Marking a boy's first beard-shaving, at about 16 years. Both of the above are home ceremonies in which the young ones are reminded of their brahmacharya, given new clothes and jewelry and joyously admitted into the adult community as young adults. --**nishchithartha** "Settlement of aim." Also called vagdana, "word-giving." A formal engagement or betrothal ceremony in which a couple pledge themselves to one another, exchanging rings and other gifts. --**vivaha**: Marriage." An elaborate and joyous ceremony performed in presence of God and Gods, in which the homa fire is central. To conclude the ceremony, the couple take seven steps to the Northeast as the groom recites: "One step for vigor, two steps for vitality, three steps for prosperity, four steps for happiness, five steps for cattle, six steps for seasons, seven steps for friendship. To me be devoted (Hiranyakeshi Grihya Sutras 1.6.21.2 VE)." See: samskara.

samskaras of later life: --**vanaprastha ashrama**: Age 48 marks the entrance into the elder advisor stage, celebrated in some communities by special ceremony. --**sannyasa ashrama vrata**: The advent of withdrawal from social duties and responsibilities at age 72 is sometimes ritually acknowledged (different from sannyasa diksha). See: sannyasa dharma. --**antyeshti**: (Sanskrit) The various funeral rites performed to guide the soul in its transition to inner worlds, including preparation of the body, cremation, bone-gathering, dispersal of ashes, home purification. See: cremation, death, pinda, shraddha, bone-gathering, samskara, shashtyabda purti, transition.

San Marga: (Sanskrit) "True path." The straight spiritual path leading to the ultimate goal, Self Realization, without detouring into unnecessary psychic exploration or pointless development of siddhis. A San Margi is a person "on the path," as opposed to a samsari, one engrossed in worldliness. San Marga also names the jnana pada. See: pada, sadhana marga, samsari.

San Marga Sanctuary: A meditation tirtha at the foot of the extinct volcano, Mount Waialeale, on Hawaii's Garden Island, Kauai. Here pilgrims follow the H-mile path, San Marga, to a natural Sivalinga, walk the path of the Tamil Nayanars around picturesque lotus lakes and ponds and visit the six shrines of the Kailasa Parampara on the banks of Saravanabhava Lake in Rishi Valley. Paths lead visitors to the sacred Wailua River, then up stone stairs to the Chola-style white-granite Iraivan Temple, hand-carved in Bangalore, India. In the sanctum sanctorum, the Supreme God, Siva (Parameshvara-Parashakti-Parasiva), will be enshrined as a massive 700-pound, single-pointed earthkeeper quartz crystal. San Marga Sanctuary, founded in 1970, is

among many public services of Saiva Siddhanta Church, one of America's senior Hindu religious institutions. See: Subramuniaswami, tirtha.

Sanatana Dharma: (Sanskrit) "Eternal religion" or "everlasting path." It is a original designation for the Hindu religion. See: Hinduism.

Sanatkumara: (Sanskrit) "Ever-youthful; perpetual virgin boy." See: Karttikeya.

sanchita karma: (Sanskrit) "Accumulated action." The accumulated consequence of an individual's actions in this and past lives. See: karma.

sanctify: To make holy.

sanctum sanctorum: "Holy of holies." Garbhagriha. The most sacred part of a temple, usually a cave-like stone chamber, in which the main icon is installed. See: darshana, garbhagriha, temple.

sandalwood: Chandana. The Asian evergreen tree Santalum album. Its sweetly fragrant heartwood is ground into the fine, tan-colored paste distributed as prasada in Saivite temples and used for sacred marks on the forehead, tilaka. Sandalwood is also prized for incense, carving and fine cabinetry.

sandhya upasana: (Sanskrit) "Worship at time's junctures." Drawing near to God at the changes of time--worship and sadhana performed in the home at dawn, noon and dusk. See: sadhana.

sangama: (Sanskrit) "Association; fellowship." Coming together in a group, especially for religious purposes. Also a town in Karnataka, South India, where the Krishna and Malaprabha rivers meet; an ancient center of Kalamukha Saivism where the Vira Saivite preceptor Basavanna lived and studied as a youth. See: congregational worship.

sankalpa: (Sanskrit) "Will; purpose; determination." A solemn vow or declaration of purpose to perform any ritual observance. Most commonly, sankalpa names the mental and verbal preparation made by a temple priest as he begins rites of worship. During the sankalpa, he informs all three worlds what he is about to do. He recites the name of the Deity, and the present time and place according to precise astrological notations and announces the type of ritual he is about to perform. Once the sankalpa is made, he is bound to complete the ceremony. See: puja.

Sankhya: (Sanskrit) "Enumeration, reckoning." See: prakriti, purusha, shad darshana, tattva.

sannidhana: (Sanskrit) "Nearness; proximity; taking charge of." A title of heads of monasteries: Guru Mahasannidhana. See: sannidhya.

sannidhya: (Sanskrit) "(Divine) presence; nearness, proximity." The radiance and blessed presence of shakti within and around a temple or a holy person.

sannyasa ashrama: (Sanskrit) "Renunciate stage." The period of life after age 72. See: ashrama.

sannyasa dharma: (Sanskrit) "Renunciate life." The life, way and traditions of those who have irrevocably renounced duties and obligations of the householder path, including personal property, wealth, ambitions, social position and family ties, in favor of the full-time monastic quest for divine awakening, Self Realization and spiritual upliftment of humanity. Traditionally, this dharma is available to those under age 25 who meet strict qualifications. Alternately, the householder may embrace sannyasa dharma after age 72 through the customary initiatory rites given by a sannyasin and then diligently pursuing his spiritual sadhana in a state of genuine renunciation and not in the midst of his family. These two forms of sannyasa are not to be confused with simply entering the sannyasa ashrama, the last stage of life. See: sannyasa, sannyasa diksha, sannyasin, videhamukti.

sannyasa diksha: (Sanskrit) "Renunciate initiation." This diksha is a formal rite, or less often an informal blessing, entering the devotee into renunciate monasticism, binding him for life to certain vows which include chastity, poverty and obedience, and directing him on the path to Self Realization. Strictest tradition requires that lifetime renunciates be single men and that they enter training in their order before age 25. However, there are certain orders which accept men into sannyasa after age 25, provided they have been in college and not in the world after that time. Others will accept widowers; and a few initiate women. Such rules and qualifications apply primarily to cenobites, that is, to those who will live and serve together in an ashrama or monastery. The rules pertaining to homeless anchorites are, for obvious reasons, more lenient. See: sannyasa dharma, videhamukti.

sannyasa: (Sanskrit) "Renunciation." "Throwing down or abandoning." Sannyasa is the repudiation of the dharma, including the obligations and duties, of the householder and the acceptance of the even more demanding dharma of the renunciate. The ancient shastras recognize four justifiable motivations for entering into sannyasa: vidvat, vividisha, markata and atura. Vidvat ("knowing; wise") sannyasa is the spontaneous withdrawal from the world in search for Self Realization which results from karma and tendencies developed in a previous life. Vividisha ("discriminating") sannyasa is renunciation to satisfy a yearning for the Self developed through scriptural study and practice. Markata sannyasa is taking refuge in sannyasa as a result of great sorrow, disappointment or misfortune in worldly pursuits. (Markata means "monkey-like," perhaps implying the analogy of a monkey clinging to its mother.) Atura ("suffering or sick") sannyasa is entering into sannyasa upon one's deathbed, realizing that there is no longer hope in life. See: sannyasa dharma, sannyasa diksha, videhamukti.

Sannyasa Upanishad: (Sanskrit) An Upanishad of the Atharva Veda. It deals with the transition to the vanaprastha and sannyasa ashramas.

sannyasin: (Sanskrit) "Renouncer." One who has taken sannyasa diksha. A Hindu monk, swami, and one of a world brotherhood (or holy order) of sannyasins. Some are wanderers and others live in monasteries. The seasoned sannyasin is truly the liberated man, the spiritual exemplar, the disciplined yogi and ultimately the knower of Truth, freed to commune with the Divine and bound to uplift humanity through the sharing of his wisdom, his peace, his devotion and his illumination, however great or small. The sannyasin is the guardian of his religion, immersed in it constantly, freed from worldliness, freed from distraction, able to offer his work and his worship in unbroken continuity and one-pointed effectiveness. He undertakes certain disciplines including the purification of body, mind and emotion. He restrains and controls the mind through his sadhana, tapas and meditative regimen. He unfolds from within himself a profound love of God and the Gods. His practice of upasana, worship, is predominantly internal, seeking God Siva within. See: sannyasa, sannyasa dharma, sannyasa diksha, swami.

Sanskrit (Sanskrita): (Sanskrit) "Well-made; refined, perfected." The classical sacerdotal language of ancient India, considered a pure vehicle for communication with the celestial worlds. It is the primary language in which Hindu scriptures are written, including the Vedas and Agamas. Employed today as a liturgical, literary and scholarly language, but no longer used as a spoken vernacular.

sant: (Sanskrit) "Saint." A Hindi or vernacular term derived from the Sanskrit sat, meaning "truth; reality."

santosha: (Sanskrit) "Contentment." See: yama-niyama.

Sarasvati: (Sanskrit) "The flowing one." Shakti, the Universal Mother; Goddess of the arts and learning, mythological consort of the God Brahma. Sarasvati, the river Goddess, is usually depicted wearing a white sari and holding a vina, sitting upon a swan or lotus flower. Prayers are offered to her for refinements of art, culture and learning. Sarasvati also names one of seven sacred rivers (Sapta Sindhu) mentioned in the Rig Veda. Parts of the Indus Valley civilization thrived along the river until it dried up in 1900bce. Its course was lost and thought a myth by some until recently discovered in images taken by a French satellite. In addition, one of the ten dashanami swami orders is the Sarasvati. See: Goddess, Shakti.

Saravana: (Sanskrit) "Thicket of reeds." Mythologically, a sacred Himalayan pond where Lord Karttikeya was nurtured; esoterically understood as the lake of divine essence, or primal consciousness. See: Karttikeya.

sari: (Hindi, (Sanskrit)) The traditional outer garment of a Hindu woman, consisting of a long, unstitched piece of cloth, usually colorful cotton or silk, wrapped

around the body, forming an ankle-length skirt, and around the bosom and over the shoulder.

sarvabhadra: (Sanskrit) "All is auspicious; the goodness of all." Bhadra indicates that which is "blessed, auspicious, dear, excellent." Sarva ("all") bhadra thus denotes the cognition that everything in the universe is a manifestation of Divinity, that it is holy, good and purposeful. See: auspiciousness, grace, Sivamaya, world.

Sarvajnanottara Agama: (Sanskrit) This text is not among the traditional list of Agamas and subsidiary scriptures. But it is thought to be a second version of Kalajnam, a subsidiary text of Vatula Agama. The available sections deal with right knowledge.

sat: (Sanskrit) "True, existing, real, good; reality, existence, truth." See: Satchidananda.

Satan: The devil; evil personified. A being who in Christian and other Semitic religions opposes God's will and tempts souls into wickedness. In Hinduism, all is seen as the manifestation of God, and there is no Satan. See: asura, hell, Naraka.

Satchidananda (Sachchidananda): (Sanskrit) "Existence-consciousness-bliss." A synonym for Parashakti. Lord Siva's Divine Mind and simultaneously the pure superconscious mind of each individual soul. It is perfect love and omniscient, omnipotent consciousness, the fountainhead of all existence, yet containing and permeating all existence. It is also called pure consciousness, pure form, substratum of existence, and more. One of the goals of the meditator or yogi is to experience the natural state of the mind, Satchidananda, holding back the vrittis through yogic practices. In Advaita Vedanta, Satchidananda is considered a description of the Absolute (Brahman). Whereas in monistic, or shuddha, Saiva Siddhanta it is understood as divine form--pure, amorphous matter or energy--not as an equivalent of the Absolute, formless, "atattva," Parasiva. In this latter school, Parasiva is radically transcendent, and Satchidananda is known as the primal and most perfectly divine form to emerge from the formless Parasiva. See: atattva, Parashakti, tattva.

satguru (sadguru): (Sanskrit) "True weighty one." A spiritual preceptor of the highest attainment--one who has realized the ultimate Truth, Parasiva, through nirvikalpa samadhi--a jivanmukta able to lead others securely along the spiritual path. He is always a sannyasin, an unmarried renunciate. All Hindu denominations teach that the grace and guidance of a living satguru is a necessity for Self Realization. He is recognized and revered as the embodiment of God, Sadasiva, the source of grace and of liberation. See: guru bhakti, guru, guru-shishya relationship, padapuja.

satgurunatha: (Sanskrit) "Lord and true guru." A highly respectful and honorific term for one's preceptor. See: satguru.

satsanga: (Sanskrit) "Holy gathering." Association of a group of devotees for non-temple worship and religious study.

sattva guna: (Sanskrit) "Purity." The quality of goodness or purity. See: guna.

satya: (Sanskrit) "Truthfulness." See: yama-niyama.

Satyaloka: (Sanskrit) "Plane of reality, truth." Also called Brahmaloaka; the realm of sahasrara chakra, it is the highest of the seven upper worlds. See: loka.

saucha: (Sanskrit) "Purity." See: purity-impurity, yama-niyama.

saumanasya: (Sanskrit) "Benevolence, causing gladness or cheerfulness of mind, right understanding (related to the term soma)." See: chakra.

savikalpa samadhi: (Sanskrit) "Enstasy with form or seed." See: enstasy, raja yoga, samadhi.

sayujya: (Sanskrit) "Intimate union." Perpetual God Consciousness. See: Sivasayujya, vishvagrasa.

scarlet: The color red with orange tint.

scepter: Rajadanda. The staff and insignia of royal or imperial authority and power held by spiritual monarchs or kings. Traditionally, the scepters of Indian kings are prepared and empowered by respected heads of traditional Hindu religious orders through esoteric means. See: danda.

scripture (scriptural): "A writing." A sacred text or holy book having authority for a given sect or religion. See: shastra, smriti, shruti.

secluded (seclusion): Isolated; hidden. Kept apart from others. See: muni.

seed karma: Dormant or anarabdha karma. All past actions which have not yet sprouted. See: karma.

seer: Visionary; rishi. A wise being or mystic who sees beyond the limits of ordinary perception. See: akasha, clairvoyance, muni, rishi, shamanism.

Self Realization: Direct knowing of the Self God, Parasiva. Self Realization is known in Sanskrit as nirvikalpa samadhi; "enstasy without form or seed;" the ultimate spiritual attainment (also called asamprajnata samadhi). Esoterically, this state is attained when the mystic kundalini force pierces through the sahasrara chakra at the crown of the head. This transcendence of all modes of human consciousness brings the realization or "nonexperience" of That which exists beyond

the mind, beyond time, form and space. But even to assign a name to Parasiva, or to its realization is to name that which cannot be named. In fact, it is "experienced" only in its aftermath as a change in perspective, a permanent transformation, and as an intuitive familiarity with the Truth that surpasses understanding. See: God Realization, enstasy, liberation, kundalini, Parasiva, raja yoga, samadhi.

Self (Self God): God Siva's perfection of Absolute Reality, Parasiva--That which abides at the core of every soul. See: atattva, Paramatman, Parasiva.

self-assertive: Quality of one who makes himself, his ideas, opinions, etc., dominant. Demanding recognition.

self-conceit: Too high an opinion of oneself; vanity, vain pride.

self-luminous: Producing its own light; radiating light.

self-reflection: Observation of, or meditation upon, oneself, one's mind, emotions, thinking. Introspection. Playing back memories and impressions locked within the subconscious, endeavoring to deal with them. It is anticipating one's future and how the past will react upon it, enhance or detract from it. See: spiritual unfoldment.

servitude: Condition of a slave subject to a master.

seva: (Sanskrit) "Service." Karma yoga. An integral part of the spiritual path, where the aspirant strives to serve without thought of reward or personal gain. The central practice of the charya pada. See: yoga.

seval: (Tamil) The large, red, fighting rooster (kukkuta in Sanskrit) that adorns Lord Murugan's flag, heralding the dawn of wisdom and the conquest of the forces of ignorance. See: Karttikeya.

sexuality: Hinduism has a healthy, unrepressed outlook on human sexuality, and sexual pleasure is part of kama, one of the four goals of life. On matters such as birth control, sterilization, masturbation, homosexuality, bisexuality, petting and polygamy, Hindu scripture is tolerantly silent, neither calling them sins nor encouraging their practice, neither condemning nor condoning. The two important exceptions to this understanding view of sexual experience are adultery and abortion, both of which are considered to carry heavy karmic implications for this and future births. See: abortion, bisexuality, homosexuality.

shabda kosha: (Sanskrit) "Sheath of sounds, or words." Vocabulary; a dictionary or glossary of terms.

shad darshana: (Sanskrit) "Six views or insights; six philosophies." Among the hundreds of Hindu darshanas known through history are six classical philosophical

systems: Nyaya, Vaisheshika, Sankhya, Yoga, Mimamsa and Vedanta. Each was tersely formulated in sutra form by its "founder," and elaborated in extensive commentaries by other writers. They are understood as varied attempts at describing Truth and the path to it. Elements of each form part of the Hindu fabric today.

--**Nyaya:** "System, rule; logic." A system of logical realism, founded sometime around 300 bce by Gautama, known for its systems of logic and epistemology and concerned with the means of acquiring right knowledge. Its tools of enquiry and rules for argumentation were adopted by all schools of Hinduism.

--**Vaisheshika:** "Distinctionism." From "vishesha," differences. Philosophy founded by Kanada (ca 300 bce) teaching that liberation is to be attained through understanding the nature of existence, which is classified in nine basic realities (dravyas): earth, water, light, air, ether, time, space, soul and mind. Nyaya and Vaisheshika are viewed as a complementary pair, with Nyaya emphasizing logic, and Vaisheshika analyzing the nature of the world.

--**Sankhya:** "Enumeration, reckoning." A philosophy founded by the sage Kapila (ca 500 bce), author of the Sankhya Sutras. Sankhya is primarily concerned with "categories of existence," tattvas, which it understands as 25 in number. The first two are the unmanifest purusha and the manifest primal nature, prakriti--the male-female polarity, viewed as the foundation of all existence. Prakriti, out of which all things evolve, is the unity of the three gunas: sattva, rajas and tamas. Sankhya and Yoga are considered an inseparable pair whose principles permeate all of Hinduism. See: prakriti, purusha.

--**Yoga:** "Yoking; joining." Ancient tradition of philosophy and practice codified by Patanjali (ca 200 bce) in the Yoga Sutras. It is also known as raja yoga, "king of yogas," or ashtanga yoga, "eight-limbed yoga." Its object is to achieve, at will, the cessation of all fluctuations of consciousness, and the attainment of Self Realization. Yoga is wholly dedicated to putting the high philosophy of Hinduism into practice, to achieve personal transformation through transcendental experience, samadhi. See: yoga.

--**Mimamsa:** "Inquiry" (or Purva, "early," Mimamsa). Founded by Jaimini (ca 200 bce), author of the Mimamsa Sutras, who taught the correct performance of Vedic rites as the means to salvation.

--**Vedanta** (or Uttara "later" Mimamsa): "End (or culmination) of the Vedas." For Vedanta, the main basis is the Upanishads and Aranyakas (the "end," anta, of the Vedas), rather than the hymns and ritual portions of the Vedas. The teaching of Vedanta is that there is one Absolute Reality, Brahman. Man is one with Brahman, and the object of life is to realize that truth through right knowledge, intuition and personal experience. The Vedanta Sutras (or Brahma Sutras) were composed by Rishi Badarayana (ca 400 bce). See: Brahma Sutra, padartha, tattva, Vedanta, yoga.

shakahara: (Sanskrit) "Vegetarian diet." From shaka, "vegetable;" and ahara, "eating; taking food." See: meat-eater, vegetarian, yama-niyama.

Shakta: (Sanskrit) "Powerful." Of or relating to Shaktism. See: Hinduism, Shaktism, tantrism.

Shakta Tantrism: (Sanskrit) See: Shaktism, tantrism.

Shakti: (Sanskrit) "Power, energy," from the root shak, "to be able." The active power or manifest energy of Siva that pervades all of existence. Its most refined aspect is Parashakti, or Satchidananda, the pure consciousness and primal substratum of all form. This pristine, divine energy unfolds as iccha shakti (the power of desire, will, love), kriya shakti (the power of action) and jnana shakti (the power of wisdom, knowing), represented as the three prongs of Siva's trishula, or trident. From these arise the five powers of revealment, concealment, dissolution, preservation and creation.

- In Saiva Siddhanta, Siva is All, and His divine energy, Shakti, is inseparable from Him. This unity is symbolized in the image of Ardhanarishvara, "half-female God." In popular, village Hinduism, the unity of Siva and Shakti is replaced with the concept of Siva and Shakti as separate entities. Shakti is represented as female, and Siva as male. In Hindu temples, art and mythology, they are everywhere seen as the divine couple. This depiction has its source in the folk-narrative sections of the Puranas, where it is given elaborate expression. Shakti is personified in many forms as the consorts of the Gods. For example, the Goddesses Parvati, Lakshmi and Sarasvati are the respective mythological consorts of Siva, Vishnu and Brahma. Philosophically, however, the caution is always made that God and God's energy are One, and the metaphor of the inseparable divine couple serves only to illustrate this Oneness.
- Within the Shakta religion, the worship of the Goddess is paramount, in Her many fierce and benign forms. Shakti is the Divine Mother of manifest creation, visualized as a female form, and Siva is specifically the Unmanifest Absolute. The fierce or black (asita) forms of the Goddess include Kali, Durga, Chandi, Chamundi, Bhadrakali and Bhairavi. The benign or white (sita) forms include Uma, Gauri, Ambika, Parvati, Maheshvari, Lalita and Annapurna. As Rajarajeshvari ("divine queen of kings"). She is the presiding Deity of the Sri Chakra yantra. She is also worshiped as the ten Mahavidyas, manifestations of the highest knowledge--Kali, Tara, Shodashi, Bhuvaneshvari, Chinnamasta, Bhairavi, Dhumavati, Bagata, Matangi and Kamala. While some Shaktas view these as individual beings, most revere them as manifestations of the singular Devi. There are also numerous minor Goddess forms, in the category of gramadevata ("village Deity"). These include Pitari, "snake-catcher" (usually represented by a simple stone), and Mariyamman, "smallpox Goddess."

- In the yoga mysticism of all traditions, divine energy, shakti, is experienced within the human body in three aspects: 1) the feminine force, ida shakti, 2) the masculine force, pingala shakti, and 3) the pure androgynous force, kundalini shakti, that flows through the sushumna nadi.
- Shakti is most easily experienced by devotees as the sublime, bliss-inspiring energy that emanates from a holy person or sanctified Hindu temple. See: Amman, Ardhanarishvara, Goddess, Parashakti, Shaktism.

Shakti Vishishtadvaita: (Sanskrit) The philosophy of Vira Saivism. See: Vira Saivism.

shaktipata: (Sanskrit) "Descent of grace." Guru diksha, initiation from the preceptor; particularly the first initiation, which awakens the kundalini and launches the process of spiritual unfoldment. See: anugraha shakti, diksha, grace, kundalini.

Shaktism (Shakta): (Sanskrit) "Doctrine of power." The religion followed by those who worship the Supreme as the Divine Mother--Shakti or Devi--in Her many forms, both gentle and fierce. Shaktism is one of the four primary sects of Hinduism. Shaktism's first historical signs are thousands of female statuettes dated ca 5500 bce recovered at the Mehrgarh village in India. In philosophy and practice, Shaktism greatly resembles Saivism, both faiths promulgating, for example, the same ultimate goals of advaitic union with Siva and moksha. But Shaktas worship Shakti as the Supreme Being exclusively, as the dynamic aspect of Divinity, while Siva is considered solely transcendent and is not worshiped. There are many forms of Shaktism, with endless varieties of practices which seek to capture divine energy or power for spiritual transformation. Geographically, Shaktism has two main forms, the Srikula "family of the Goddess Sri (or Lakshmi)," which respects the brahminical tradition (a mainstream Hindu tradition which respects caste and purity rules) and is strongest in South India; and the Kalikula, "family of Kali," which rejects brahminical tradition and prevails in Northern and Eastern India. Four major expressions of Shaktism are evident today: folk-shamanism, yoga, devotionism and universalism. Among the eminent mantras of Shaktism is: Aum Hrim Chandikayai Namah, "I bow to Her who tears apart all dualities." There are many varieties of folk Shaktism gravitating around various forms of the Goddess, such as Kali, Durga and a number of forms of Amman. Such worship often involves animal sacrifice and fire-walking, though the former is tending to disappear. See: Amman, Goddess, Ishta Devata, Kali, Shakti, tantrism.

shaktopaya: (Sanskrit) "Way of power." See: upaya.

Shakya: (Sanskrit) Name of the Saivite dynasty into which Buddha, also called Shakyamuni, was born (in what is now Nepal). See: Buddha.

shamanism (shamanic): From the Sanskrit shramana, "ascetic," akin to shram, meaning "to exert." Generally refers to any religion based on the belief that good or evil spirits can be influenced by priests, or shamans, who serve as intermediaries between man and divine forces. Descriptive of many of the world's tribal, indigenous faiths. See also: folk-shamanic, pagan, incantation, mysticism, Shaktism.

Shambhavopaya: (Sanskrit) "Way of Shambhu (Siva)." See: upaya.

Shandilya Upanishad: (Sanskrit) Belongs to the Atharva Veda. Discusses eight forms of yoga, restraints, observances, breath control, meditation and the nature of Truth.

Shankara: (Sanskrit) "Conferring happiness;" "propitious." An epithet of Siva.

Shankara: (Sanskrit) One of Hinduism's most extraordinary monks (788820) and preeminent guru of the Smarta Sampradaya. Noted for his monistic philosophy of Advaita Vedanta, his many scriptural commentaries, and formalizing ten orders of sannyasins with pontifical headquarters at strategic points across India. He lived only 32 years, but traveled throughout India and transformed the Hindu world in that time. See: Dashanami, Shankaracharya pitha, shanmata sthapanacharya, Smarta Sampradaya, Vedanta.

Shankaracharya pitha: (Sanskrit) Advaita monasteries established by Shankara (ca 788820) as centers of Smarta authority in India, each with a distinct guru parampara and a reigning pontiff entitled Shankaracharya, and one of the four Upanishadic mahavakyas as a mantra. East coast: Govardhana Matha, in Puri (center of the Aranya and Vana orders). Himalayas: Jyotih Matha, near Badrinath (Giri, Parvata and Sagara orders). West coast: Sharada Matha, in Dvaraka (Tirtha and Ashrama orders). South: Sringeri Matha (Bharati, Puri and Sarasvati orders). A fifth prominent pitha, associated with Sringeri Matha, is in Kanchipuram, also in the South. See: Dashanami, Smarta, Shankara.

shanmata sthapanacharya: (Sanskrit) "Founder-teacher of the six-fold system." A title conferred upon Adi Shankara while he was living. It refers to his attempt to consolidate the six main sects of Hinduism in nonsectarian unity, as represented by its altar of five (or six) Deities. See: Smartism, panchayatana puja, Shankara.

Shanmukha Gayatri: (Sanskrit) A Vedic Gayatri chant, the Savitri Gayatri modified to address Lord Karttikeya as Shanmukha "He of six faces."

Shanmukha: (Sanskrit) "Six-faced." A name for Lord Murugan or Karttikeya, denoting the multiplicity of His divine functions. See: Karttikeya.

sharana: (Sanskrit) "Refuge." See: Sivasharana, Vira Saivism.

sharira: (Sanskrit) "Body; husk." Three bodies of the soul: 1) sthula sharira, "gross or physical body" (also called annamaya kosha), the odic body; 2) sukshma sharira, "subtle body" (also called linga sharira, it includes the pranamaya, manomaya and vijnanamaya koshas); 3) karana sharira, "causal body" (also called anandamaya kosha), the actinic causal body. Another term for sharira is deha. See: deha, kosha, subtle body.

shashtyabda purti: (Sanskrit) "Sixtieth birthday celebration." Done for the couple on the husband's birthday, usually with many family and friends attending. It consists in a homa, retaking of marriage vows and retying the wedding pendant.

shastra: (Sanskrit) "Sacred text; teaching." 1) Any religious or philosophical treatise, or body of writings. 2) A department of knowledge, a science; e.g., the Dharma Shastras on religious law, Artha Shastras on politics.

shastri: (Sanskrit) One who is knowledgeable in shastra, or scriptures.

Shatapatha Brahmana: (Sanskrit) "Priest manual of 100 paths." A priestly manual of the Shukla Yajur Veda, dealing with theology, philosophy and modes of worship.

shatkona: (Sanskrit) "Six-pointed star," formed by two interlocking triangles, the upper one representing Siva's transcendent Being, and the lower one Siva's manifest energy, Shakti. The shatkona is part of Lord Karttikeya's yantra. See: Ardhanarishvara Karttikeya.

shatsthala: (Sanskrit) "Six stages." Vira Saivism's six stages to union with Siva. See: Vira Saivism.

shatter: To break into many pieces suddenly, as if struck.

sheath: A covering or receptacle, such as the husk surrounding a grain of rice. In Sanskrit, it is kosha, philosophically the bodily envelopes of the soul. See: kosha, soul, subtle body.

shikhara: (Sanskrit) "Summit or crest." The towering superstructure above the garbhagriha in North Indian style temples. In Southern temples, shikhara refers to the top stone of the superstructure, or vimana.

Shiksha Vedanga: (Sanskrit) Auxiliary Vedic texts on Sanskrit phonetics, among four linguistic skills taught for mastery of the Vedas and rites of yajna. Shiksha means "wish to accomplish; learning, study method." See: Vedanga.

Shilpa Shastra: (Sanskrit) "Art or craft manual." 1) A particular class of works which formed the primary teachings on any of the fine arts or sacred sciences, such

as architecture, dance, painting, jewelry-making, pottery, weaving, and basketry, garlandry, metal-working, acting, cooking and horsemanship. The earliest Shilpa Shastras are thought to date to 200 bce. Many were written between the 5th and 14th centuries. See: kala64, Sthapatyaveda.

shishya: (Sanskrit) "A pupil or disciple," especially one who has proven himself and has formally been accepted by a guru.

shloka: (Sanskrit) "Verse," from the verbal root, shlok,"to compose." A verse, phrase, proverb or hymn of praise, usually in a specified meter. Especially a verse of two lines, each of sixteen syllables. Shloka is the primary verse form of the Mahabharata and Ramayana. See: bhashya, sutra.

shraddha: (Sanskrit) "Faith; belief." See: pancha shraddha.

shraddha: (Sanskrit) "Memorial." Relating to commemorative ceremonies for the deceased, held one week, one month after death, and annually thereafter, according to tradition. See: death, bone-gathering, pinda, samskaras of later life.

shraddhadharana: (Sanskrit) "Collection or concentration of faith or belief." A term used in Dancing with Siva for creed, a concise synopsis of religious doctrine. See: creed, faith.

shrouta: (Sanskrit) "Related to hearing; audible." That which is prescribed by or conforms with the Vedas.

Shrauta Shastra: (Sanskrit) "Texts on the revelation." 1) Refers to scriptures or teachings that are in agreement with the Vedas. 2) A specific group of texts of the Kalpa Vedanga, and part of the essential study for Vedic priests. The Shrauta Shastras offer explanation of the yajna rituals. See: Vedanga.

shruti: (Sanskrit) "That which is heard." Hinduism's revealed scriptures, of supreme theological authority and spiritual value. They are timeless teachings transmitted to rishis, or seers, directly by God thousands of years ago. Shruti is thus said to be apaurusheya, "impersonal," or rather "suprahuman." Shruti consists essentially of the Vedas and the Agamas, preserved initially through oral tradition and eventually written down in Sanskrit. Among the many sacred books of the Hindus, these two bodies of knowledge are held in the highest esteem. For countless centuries shruti has been the basis of philosophical discussion, study and commentary, and this attention has given rise to countless schools of thought. It is also the subject of deep study and meditation, to realize the wisdom of the ancients within oneself. Most mantras are drawn from shruti, used for rites of worship, both public and domestic, as well as personal prayer and japa. It is a remarkable tribute to Hindu culture that so much of shruti was preserved for thousands of years without alteration by means of oral instruction from guru to shishya, generation after

generation. In the Veda tradition this was accomplished by requiring the student to learn each verse in eleven different ways, including backwards. Traditionally shruti is not read, but chanted according to extremely precise rules of grammar, pitch, intonation and rhythm. This brings forth its greatest power. In the sacred language of shruti, word and meaning are so closely aligned that hearing these holy scriptures properly chanted is magical in its effect upon the soul of the listener. See: Agamas, smriti, Vedas.

shubha muhurta: (Sanskrit) "Auspicious time." A range of time when specified activities are most likely to thrive and succeed. See: muhurta.

Shuddha Saiva Siddhanta: (Sanskrit) "Pure Saiva Siddhanta," a term first used by Tirumular in the Tirumantiram to describe his monistic Saiva Siddhanta and distinguish it from pluralistic Siddhanta and other forms of Siddhanta that do not encompass the ultimate monism of Vedanta.

Shuddhavidya: (Sanskrit) "Pure Knowledge." The fifth tattva in the Saiva Siddhanta system. See: tattva.

shudra: (Sanskrit) "Worker, servant." The social class of skilled artisans, workers and laborers. See: varna dharma.

Shukla Yajur Veda: (Sanskrit) See: Yajur Veda.

Shulba Shastra(s): (Sanskrit) Practical manuals giving the measurements and procedures for constructing the sites of Vedic yajna rites. A division of the Kalpa Vedanga (Veda limb on rituals), these sutras employ sophisticated geometry and are India's earliest extant mathematical texts. Shulba means "string or cord," denoting the use of string for measuring. See: Vedanga.

Shum: A Natha mystical language of meditation revealed in Switzerland in 1968 by Sivaya Subramuniaswami.

Shunya Sampadane: (Sanskrit) "Gaining of Nothingness." A primary text of Vira Saivism (ca 1550) consisting of debates and writings of the Siva Sharanas. Shunya: "the void, the distinctionless absolute;" sampadana: "attainment, realization, enlightenment."

shuttle: An instrument that carries a spool of thread in the weaving of cloth.

Siddha Marga: (Sanskrit) Another term for Siddha Siddhanta. See: Siddha Siddhanta, siddha yoga.

siddha: (Sanskrit) A "perfected one" or accomplished yogi, a person of great spiritual attainment or powers. See: siddhi, siddha yoga, siddha yogi.

Siddha Siddhanta Paddhati: (Sanskrit) "Tracks on the doctrines of the adepts." A text of 353 highly mystical verses, ascribed to Gorakshanatha, dealing with the esoteric nature of the inner bodies and the soul's union with Supreme Reality. See: Gorakshanatha, Siddha Siddhanta.

Siddha Siddhanta: (Sanskrit) Siddha Siddhanta, also called Gorakhnatha Saivism, is generally considered to have come in the lineage of the earlier ascetic orders of India. Its most well-known preceptor was Gorakshanatha (ca 1000) a disciple of Matsyendranatha, patron saint of Nepal, revered by certain esoteric Buddhist schools as well as by Hindus. The school systematized and developed the practice of hatha yoga to a remarkable degree. Indeed, nearly all of what is today taught about hatha yoga comes from this school. Among its central texts are Hatha Yoga Pradipika by Svatanmarama, Gheranda Samhita, Siva Samhita and Jnanamrita. Siddha Siddhanta theology embraces both transcendent Siva (being) and immanent Siva (becoming). Siva is both the efficient and material cause of the universe. Devotion is expressed through temple worship and pilgrimage, with the central focus on internal worship and kundalini yoga, with the goal of realizing Parasamvid, the supreme transcendent state of Siva. Today there are perhaps 750,000 adherents of Siddha Siddhanta Saivism, who are often understood as Shaktas or advaita tantrics. The school fans out through India, but is most prominent in North India and Nepal. Devotees are called yogis, and stress is placed on world renunciation--even for householders. This sect is also most commonly known as Natha, the Gorakshapantha and Siddha Yogi Sampradaya. Other names include Adinatha Sampradaya, Nathamatha and Siddhamarga. See: Gorakshanatha.

siddha yoga: (Sanskrit) "Yoga of perfected attainment, or of supernatural powers." 1) A term used in the Tirumantiram and other Saiva scriptures to describe the yoga which is the way of life of adepts after attaining of Parasiva. Siddha yoga involves the development of magical or mystical powers, or siddhis, such as the eight classical powers. It is a highly advanced yoga which seeks profound transformation of body, mind and emotions and the ability to live in a flawless state of God Consciousness. 2) The highly accomplished practices of certain alchemists. See: siddha yogi, siddhi.

Siddha Yogi Sampradaya: (Sanskrit) Another term for Siddha Siddhanta. See: Siddha Siddhanta.

siddha yogi: (Sanskrit) "Yogi of perfection." A perfected one, adept, a realized being who is the embodiment of the most profound yogic states and has attained magical or mystical powers. See: siddha yoga, siddhi.

siddhanta: (Sanskrit) "Final attainments or conclusions." Siddhanta refers to ultimate understanding arrived at in any given field of knowledge.

siddhanta shravana (or shravana): (Sanskrit) "Scriptural listening." See: yama-niyama.

siddhi: (Sanskrit) "Power, accomplishment; perfection." Extraordinary powers of the soul, developed through consistent meditation and deliberate, grueling, often uncomfortable tapas, or awakened naturally through spiritual maturity and yogic sadhana. Through the repeated experience of Self Realization, siddhis naturally unfold according to the needs of the individual. Before Self Realization, the use or development of siddhis is among the greatest obstacles on the path because it cultivates ahamkara, I-ness, and militates against the attainment of prapatti, complete submission to the will of God, Gods and guru. Six siddhis in particular are considered primary obstacles to samadhi: clairvoyance (adarsha siddhi or divya siddhi), clairaudience (shravana siddhi or divyashravana), divination (pratibha siddhi), super-feeling (vedana siddhi) and super-taste (asvadana siddhi), super-smell (varta siddhi). The eight classical siddhis are: 1) anima: to be as small as an atom; 2) mahima: to become infinitely large; 3) laghima: super-lightness, levitation; 4) prapti: pervasiveness, extension, to be anywhere at will; 5) prakamya: fulfillment of desires; 6) vashitva: control of natural forces; 7) ishivitva: supremacy over nature; 8) kama-avasayitva: complete satisfaction. The supreme siddhi (parasiddhi) is realization of the Self, Parasiva. See: ahamkara, prapatti, siddha yoga.

Sikhism: "Discipleship." Religion of nine million members founded in India about 500 years ago by the saint Guru Nanak. A reformist faith which rejects idolatry and the caste system, its holy book is the Adi Granth, and main holy center is the Golden Temple of Amritsar. See: Adi Granth.

simantonnayana: (Sanskrit) "Hair-parting rite." See: samskaras of birth.

sin: Intentional transgression of divine law. Akin to the Latin sons, "guilty." Hinduism does not view sin as a crime against God, but as an act against dharma--moral order--and one's own self. It is thought natural, if unfortunate, that young souls act wrongly, for they are living in nescience, avidya, the darkness of ignorance. Sin is an adharmic course of action which automatically brings negative consequences. The term sin carries a double meaning, as do its Sanskrit equivalents: 1) a wrongful act, 2) the negative consequences resulting from a wrongful act. In Sanskrit the wrongful act is known by several terms, including pataka (from pat, "to fall") papa, enas, kilbisha, adharma, anrita and rina (transgress, in the sense of omission). The residue of sin is called papa, sometimes conceived of as a sticky, astral substance which can be dissolved through penance (prayashchitta), austerity (tapas) and good deeds (sukritya). This astral substance can be psychically seen within the inner, subconscious aura of the individual. Note that papa is also accrued through unknowing or unintentional transgressions of dharma, as in the term aparadha (offense, fault, mistake). --**inherent (or original) sin:** A doctrine of Semitic faiths whereby each soul is born in sin as a result of Adam's disobedience in the Garden of Eden. Sometimes mistakenly compared to the Saiva Siddhanta concept of the three malas, especially anava. See: pasha. --**mortal sin:** According to some theologies, sins so grave that they can never be expiated and which cause the soul to

be condemned to suffer eternally in hell. In Hinduism, there are no such concepts as inherent or mortal sin. See: aura, evil, karma, papa.

Siva Advaita: (Sanskrit) Also called Siva Vishishtadvaita, or Saivite "qualified nondualism," Siva Advaita is the philosophy of Srikantha (ca 1050) as expounded in his commentary on the Brahma Sutras (ca 500-200 bce). Patterned after the Vaishnavite Vishishtadvaita of Ramanuja, this philosophy was later amplified by Appaya Dikshita. Brahman, or Siva, is transcendent and the efficient and material cause of the world and souls. Souls are not identical to Him and never merge in Him, even after liberation. As a school Siva Advaita remained exclusively intellectual, never enjoying a following of practitioners. Purification, devotion and meditation upon Siva as the Self--the akasha within the heart--define the path. Meditation is directed to the Self, Siva, the One Existence that evolved into all form. Liberation depends on grace, not deeds. See: Appaya Dikshita, Saivism, Srikantha.

Siva consciousness: Sivachaitanya. A broad term naming the experience or state of being conscious of Siva in a multitude of ways, such as in the five expressed in the following meditation. **Vital Breath: prana.** Experience the inbreath and outbreath as Siva's will within your body. Become attuned to the ever-present pulse of the universe, knowing that nothing moves but by His divine will. **All-Pervasive Energy: shakti.** Become conscious of the flow of life within your body. Realize that it is the same universal energy within every living thing. Practice seeing the life energy within another's eyes. **Manifest Sacred Form: darshana.** Hold in your mind a sacred form, such as Nataraja, Sivalinga or your satguru--who is Sadasiva--and think of nothing else. See every form as a form of our God Siva. **Inner Light: jyoti.** Observe the light that illumines your thoughts. Concentrate only on that light, as you might practice being more aware of the light on a TV screen than of its changing pictures. **Sacred Sound: nada.** Listen to the constant high-pitched ee sounding in your head. It is like the tone of an electrical transformer, a hundred tamburas distantly playing or a humming swarm of bees.

- These five constitute the "Sivachaitanya Panchatantra," five simple experiences that bring the Divine into the reach of each individual. Sivachaitanya, of course, applies to deeper states of meditation and contemplation as well. See: jnana, mind (five states), Sivasayujya.

Siva Drishti: (Sanskrit) A scripture of Kashmir Saivism, now lost, written by Somananda, a disciple of Vasugupta. See: Kashmir Saivism.

Siva Purana: (Sanskrit) "Ancient [lore] of Siva." 1) A collection of six major scriptures sacred to Saivites. 2) The name of the oldest of these six texts, though some consider it a version of the Vayu Purana.

Siva Rakshamani Dipika: (Sanskrit) A purely nondual commentary and interpretation by Appaya Dikshita (15541626) on the writings of Srikantha. See: Saivism.

Siva Samhita: (Sanskrit) Text from the Gorakshanatha school of Saivism, ca 1700. In 212 sutras it discusses anatomy, asanas, energy, breathing and philosophy. It is available in various languages and widely studied as a valuable overview of yoga practice.

Siva: (Sanskrit) "The auspicious, gracious or kindly one." Supreme Being of the Saivite religion. God Siva is All and in all, simultaneously the creator and the creation, both immanent and transcendent. As personal Deity, He is creator, preserver and destroyer. He is a one being, perhaps best understood in three perfections: Parameshvara (Primal Soul), Parashakti (pure consciousness) and Parasiva (Absolute Reality). See: Ishta Devata, Parameshvara, Parashakti, Parasiva, Nataraja, Sadasiva, Saivism, Satchidananda.

Siva Sutra(s): (Sanskrit) The seminal or seed scripture of Kashmir Saivism, 77 aphorisms revealed to Sage Vasugupta (ca 800). See: Vasugupta.

Sivachaitanya: (Sanskrit) "God consciousness." See: Siva consciousness.

Sivachara: (Sanskrit) "Treating all as God." See: Vira Saivism.

Sivacharya: (Sanskrit) The hereditary priests of the Saiva Siddhanta tradition. The title of Adisaiva Brahmins. An Adisaiva priest who has received the necessary training and dikshas to perform public Siva temple rites known as Agamic nitya paratha puja. A fully qualified Sivacharya is also known as archaka. Sivacharya, too, names the family clan of this priest tradition. See: Adisaiva. brahmin.

Sivajnanabodham: (Sanskrit) "Treatise on Siva Wisdom." A work authored (or, some believe, a portion of the Raurava Agama translated into Tamil) by Meykandar, ca 1300, consisting of 12 sutras describing the relationship between God, soul and world. The Meykandar Sampradaya revere it as their primary philosophical text, and consider it a pluralistic exposition. For others, it is monistic in character, the pluralistic interpretation being introduced by later commentators. Included in this important text is an acute commentary on each of the 12 sutras. See: Meykandar Shastras.

Sivakarnamrita: (Sanskrit) A text by Appaya Dikshita (15541626) written to reestablish the superiority of God Siva in the face of widespread conversion to Vaishnavism. See: Appaya Dikshita.

Sivalaya: (Sanskrit) The holy Siva temple. "Siva's house or dwelling (alaya)." See: temple.

Sivalinga: (Sanskrit) "Mark, or sign, of Siva." The most prevalent icon of Siva, found in virtually all Siva temples. A rounded, elliptical, aniconic image, usually set on a circular base, or pitha. The Sivalinga is the simplest and most ancient symbol of Siva, especially of Parasiva, God beyond all forms and qualities. The pitha represents Parashakti, the manifesting power of God. Lingas are usually of stone (either carved or naturally existing, svayambhu, such as shaped by a swift-flowing river), but may also be of metal, precious gems, crystal, wood, earth or transitory materials such as ice. According to the Karana Agama (6), a transitory Sivalinga may be made of 12 different materials: sand, rice, cooked food, river clay, cow dung, butter, rudraksha seeds, ashes, sandalwood, dharba grass, a flower garland or molasses. See: murti, Saivism, svayambhu Linga.

Sivaloka: (Sanskrit) "Realm of Siva." See: loka.

Sivamaya: (Sanskrit) "Formed, made, consisting of or full of Siva." Denotes that all of existence--all worlds, all beings, all of manifestation, that which undergoes creation, preservation and destruction, all dualities and paradoxes--consists of and is pervaded by Siva. An important concept of monistic Saivism. See: sarvabhadra, world, tattva.

Sivamayakosha: (Sanskrit) "Sheath composed of Siva." The Primal Soul form, Parameshvara--the body of God Siva--into which the individual soul merges as the fulfillment of its evolution. See: Parameshvara, vishvagrasi.

Sivanadiyar: (Tamil) "Slave of Siva." Conveys a mystic relationship between the devotee and Siva in which all spiritual, mental and physical actions are perceived as fulfilling the will and design of Siva. See: karma yoga.

Sivananda: (Sanskrit) "Bliss of Siva." See: Swami Sivananda.

Sivaness: Quality of being Siva or like Siva, especially sharing in His divine state of consciousness. See: samarasa, Siva consciousness, Sivasayujya.

Sivanubhava Mandapa: (Sanskrit) The "hall of Siva experience," where the Vira Saivites gathered to develop the basic doctrines of the movement in the 12th century.

Sivaratri: (Sanskrit) "Night of Siva." See: Mahasivaratri.

Siva's five faces: See: Sadasiva.

Sivasayujya: (Sanskrit) "Intimate union with Siva." Becoming one with God. The state of perpetual Siva consciousness; simultaneous perception of the inner and the outer. A permanent state of oneness with Siva, even in the midst of ordinary activities, the aftermath or plateau which comes after repeated Self Realization experiences. Rishi Tirumular says: "Sayujya is the state of jagratita--the 'Beyond

Consciousness.' Sayujya is to abide forever in upashanta, the peace that knows no understanding. Sayujya is to become Siva Himself. Sayujya is to experience the infinite power of inward bliss forever and ever (Tirumantiram 1513)." In many Hindu schools of thought it is the highest attainment. It dawns when the kundalini resides coiled in the sahasrara chakra. See: jivanmukti, kaivalya, kundalini, moksha.

Siva-Shakti: (Sanskrit) Father-Mother God, both immanent and transcendent. A name for God Siva encompassing His unmanifest Being and manifest energy. See: Ardhanarishvara, Parameshvara, Primal Soul, Siva.

Sivasharana: (Sanskrit) "One surrendered in God." See: Vira Saivism.

Sivathondan: (Tamil) "Servant of Siva." Conveys the same mystic meaning as Sivanadiyar, denoting a devotee who regularly performs actions dedicated to God Siva; selfless work in service to others. See: karma yoga.

Sivathodu: (Tamil) "Service to Siva." Akin to the concept of karma yoga. See: karma yoga.

Sivaya Namah: (Sanskrit) "Adoration to Siva." Alternate form of Namah Sivaya. See: Namah Sivaya.

Sivena saha Nartanam: (Sanskrit) "Dancing with Siva."

Skanda: (Sanskrit) "Quicksilver; leaping one." One of Lord Karttikeya's oldest names, and His form as scarlet-hued warrior God. See: Karttikeya.

Skanda Shashthi: (Sanskrit) A six-day festival in October-November celebrating Lord Karttikeya's, or Skanda's, victory over the forces of darkness.

slaughter: The killing of animals for food; the murder of many people.

Smarta Sampradaya: (Sanskrit) The teaching tradition of Hinduism's Smarta sect, formalized by Adi Shankara in the 9th century. See: Smartism.

Smarta: (Sanskrit) "Of or related to smriti," the secondary Hindu scriptures. See: Smartism, smriti.

Smartism: (Sanskrit) Sect based on the secondary scriptures (smriti). The most liberal of the four major Hindu denominations, an ancient Vedic brahminical tradition (ca 700 bce) which from the 9th century onward was guided and deeply influenced by the Advaita Vedanta teachings of the reformist Adi Shankara. Its adherents rely mainly on the classical smriti literature, especially the Itihasas (Ramayana and Mahabharata, the latter of which includes the Bhagavad Gita), Puranas and Dharma Shastras. These are regarded as complementary to and a

means to understanding the Vedas. Smartas adhere to Shankara's view that all Gods are but various depictions of Saguna Brahman. Thus, Smartas are avowedly eclectic, worshipping all the Gods and discouraging sectarianism. The Smarta system of worship, called panchayatana puja, reinforces this outlook by including the major Deity of each primary Hindu sect of ancient days: Ganesha, Surya, Vishnu, Siva and Shakti. To encompass a sixth important lineage, Shankara recommended the addition of a sixth Deity, Kumara. Thus he was proclaimed shanmata sthapanacharya, founder of the six-fold system. One among the six is generally chosen as the devotee's preferred Deity, Ishta Devata. For spiritual authority, Smartas look to the regional monasteries established across India by Shankara, and to their pontiffs. These are the headquarters of ten orders of renunciate monks who spread the Advaita Vedanta teachings far and wide. Within Smartism three primary religious approaches are distinguished: ritualistic, devotional and philosophical. See: dashanami, panchayatana puja, Shankara.

smriti: (Sanskrit) "That which is remembered; the tradition." Hinduism's nonrevealed, secondary but deeply revered scriptures, derived from man's insight and experience. Smriti speaks of secular matters--science, law, history, agriculture, etc.--as well as spiritual lore, ranging from day-to-day rules and regulations to superconscious outpourings. 1) The term smriti refers to a specific collection of ancient Sanskrit texts as follows: the six or more Vedangas, the four Upavedas, the two Itihasas, and the 18 main Puranas. Among the Vedangas, the Kalpa Vedanga defines codes of ritual in the Shrauta and Shulba Shastras, and domestic-civil laws in the Grihya and Dharma Shastras. Also included as classical smriti are the founding sutras of six ancient philosophies called shad darshana (Sankhya, Yoga, Nyaya, Vaisheshika, Mimamsa and Vedanta). 2) In a general sense, smriti may refer to any text other than shruti (revealed scripture) that is revered as scripture within a particular sect. From the vast body of sacred literature, shastra, each sect and school claims its own preferred texts as secondary scripture, e.g., the Ramayana of Vaishnavism and Smartism, or the Tirumurai of Saiva Siddhanta. Thus, the selection of smriti varies widely from one sect and lineage to another. See: Mahabharata, Ramayana, Tirumurai.

snare: A trap for catching animals.

social dharma: (varna dharma). See: dharma.

solace: A comforting or easing of distress, pain or sorrow.

solemn: Observed or performed according to ritual or tradition. Formal, serious, inspiring feelings of awe. --**solemnize:** To consecrate with formal ceremony. See: sacrament, samskara.

soliloquy: An act of speaking to oneself.

solitaire (solitary): A hermit. One who lives alone and away from all human company.

Somananda: (Sanskrit) Disciple of Vasugupta and author of Sivadrishi (ca 850-900), which was said to be a highly influential explanation and defense of the Kashmir Saiva philosophy. See: Kashmir Saivism.

Somanath Temple: (Sanskrit) Ancient center of Pashupata Saivism located in modern Gujarat state and mentioned in the Mahabharata. The first recorded temple was built there before 100. In 1026 the then fabulously wealthy temple was sacked by Muslim invaders, the Sivalinga smashed and 50,000 brahmins slaughtered. The temple was rebuilt several times and finally demolished by the Moghul emperor Aurangzeb (ca 1700). Sardar Patel, deputy prime minister of India, spearheaded its reconstruction in 1947.

soul: The real being of man, as distinguished from body, mind and emotions. The soul--known as atman or purusha--is the sum of its two aspects, the form or body of the soul and the essence of the soul (though many texts use the word soul to refer to the essence only). --**essence or nucleus of the soul:** Man's innermost and unchanging being--Pure Consciousness (Parashakti or Satchidananda) and Absolute Reality (Parasiva). This essence was never created, does not change or evolve and is eternally identical with God Siva's perfections of Parashakti and Parasiva. --**soul body:** anandamaya kosha ("sheath of bliss"), also referred to as the "causal body" (karana sharira), "innermost sheath" and "body of light." Body of the soul, or soul body, names the soul's manifest nature as an individual being--an effulgent, human-like form composed of light (quantums). It is the emanational creation of God Siva, destined to one day merge back into Him. During its evolution, the soul functions through four types of outer sheaths that envelope the soul form--mental, instinctive-intellectual, vital and physical--and employs the mental faculties of manas, buddhi and ahamkara, as well as the five agents of perception (jnanendriyas), and five agents of action (karmendriyas). The "soul body" is not a body in sense of a case, a vessel, vehicle or enclosure for something else. The soul body is the soul itself--a radiant, self-effulgent, human-like, super-intelligent being. Its very composition is Satchidananda in various subtle levels of manifestation. It is the finest of subatomic forms, on the quantum level. The soul form evolves as its consciousness evolves, becoming more and more refined until finally it is the same intensity or refinement as the Primal Soul, Parameshvara. The experiences of life, in all the various planes of consciousness, are "food for the soul," reaping lessons that actually raise the level of intelligence and divine love. Thus, very refined souls, whether embodied or in the disembodied, ajiva, state, are like walking intelligences with inventive creativeness and powers of preservation, beaming with love and luminosity in their self-effulgent bodies of quantum light particles. See: atman, evolution of the soul, indriya, kosha, Parashakti, Parasiva, purusha, quantum, Satchidananda, spiritual unfoldment.

Soundless Sound: Paranada. See: nada.

sound: Shabda. As the darshana, or "seeing," of the Divine is a central article of faith for Hindus, similarly, hearing the Divine is spiritually indispensable. The ears are a center of many nadis connected to inner organs of perception. Gurus may when imparting initiation whisper in the ear of disciples to stimulate these centers and give a greater effect to their instructions. During temple puja, bells ring loudly, drums resound, conches and woodwinds blare to awaken worshipers from routine states of consciousness. Meditation on inner sound, called nada-anusandhana, is an essential yoga practice. Listening to the Vedas or other scripture is a mystical process. Traditional music is revered as the nectar of the Divine. See: Aum, nada, Siva consciousness.

sovereign: Above or superior to all others. Supreme in rank or authority.

sow: To scatter or plant, as seeds for cultivation; disseminate; propagate.

span: To stretch across or over, as a bridge spans a river. To cover or take in the whole of something.

Spanda Karika: (Sanskrit) A commentary of 52 verses by Vasugupta on the Siva Sutras. Also called the Spanda Sutras. See: Vasugupta, Vira Saivism.

spark: A small burning piece of matter, usually thrown off by a fire. A tiny beginning. To stir or activate.

spectrum: A series of colored bands which blend one into the other so as to include the entire range of colors, as a rainbow. The entire range of variations of anything, as in the spectrum of all possible emotions.

speculate (speculation): To conjecture, reflect, think or meditate on a subject. See: meditation, self-reflection.

sphatika: (Sanskrit) "Quartz crystal." From sphaṭ, "to expand; blossom; to burst open or into view." See: sphatika Sivalinga.

sphatika Sivalinga: (Sanskrit) "Crystal mark of God." A quartz-crystal Sivalinga. See: San Marga Sanctuary, Sivalinga, Svayambhu Linga.

sphere: A world. The area, place; the extent or range or action, experience or influence. See: loka, world.

Spinoza, Baruch: Dutch philosopher (1632-1677) who taught a monistic pantheism of one infinite substance, God or nature.

spiritual evolution: Adhyatma prasara. See: adhyatma prasara, evolution of the soul.

spiritual unfoldment: Adhyatma vikasa. The unfoldment of the spirit, the inherent, divine soul of man. The very gradual expansion of consciousness as kundalini shakti slowly rises through the sushumna. The term spiritual unfoldment indicates this slow, imperceptible process, likened to a lotus flower's emerging from bud to effulgent beauty. Contrasted with development, which implies intellectual study; or growth, which implies character building and sadhana. Sound intellect and good character are the foundation for spiritual unfoldment, but they are not the unfoldment itself. When philosophical training and sadhana is complete, the kundalini rises safely and imperceptively, without jerks, twitches, tears or hot flashes. Brings greater willpower, compassion and perceptive qualities. See: adhyatma vikasa, kundalini, liberation, pada, sadhana, sadhana marga, San Marga, tapas.

splendor (splendid): Great brightness, magnificent in richness, beauty or character. Grandeur.

spouse: A partner in a marriage; a husband or wife.

Sri Chakra: (Sanskrit) "Venerated wheel." See: yantra.

Sri Lanka: "Venerable lion." Island country off the southeast tip of India, formerly called Ceylon, 80% Buddhist, home to several million Tamil Saivites who live mostly in the arid north. It was a British colony until independence in 1948 as a member of the Commonwealth; became a republic in 1972; 25,000 square miles, 15 million population.

sri paduka: (Sanskrit) The guru's holy sandals. See: paduka.

Sri Rudram: (Sanskrit) "Hymn to the wielder of awesome powers." Preeminent Vedic hymn to Lord Siva as the God of dissolution, chanted daily in Siva temples throughout India. It is in this long prayer, located in the middle of the Yajur Veda, Taittiriya Samhita, the first of the three Vedas, that the Saivite mantra Namah Shivaya first appears.

sri: (Sanskrit) "Radiant, beautiful, majestic; prosperous." An honorific prefix meaning "sacred, holy," often attached to the names of Deities (as in Sri Ganesha); to the names of scriptural works or eminent persons; similar to the English reverend or, more commonly, Mr. (the feminine equivalent is shrimati).

Srikantha: (Sanskrit) A saint and philosopher (ca 1050) who promoted a Saivite theology which embraced monism and dualism. Founder of the Saiva school called Siva Advaita, or Siva Vishishtadvaita, teaching a "Saivite qualified nondualism," resembling Ramanuja's Vaishnavite Vishishtadvaita. He was also known as Nilakantha Sivacharya. See: Siva Advaita.

Srikumara: (Sanskrit) Monistic Saiva Siddhanta philosopher (ca 1050) who refuted the Shankaran Vedanta doctrine of maya as illusion and expounded that Siva is both material cause (upadana karana) and efficient cause (nimitta karana).

Srinagara: (Sanskrit) A principal city of Kashmir.

Srinatha: (Sanskrit) A Kashmir Saivite teacher of monistic theism. See: Durvasas.

srishti (Sanskrit) "Creation." See: Nataraja.

stave off: To push back, impede, keep from happening.

steadfast: Constant. Firm, established, secure. Not wavering or changeable.

sthapati: (Sanskrit) From stha, "building" or "place," and pati, "lord or father." A master of Agamic temple architecture, sculpture, city planning and other traditional building arts. A sthapati must be well versed in the Shilpa Shastras, experienced in all aspects of temple construction, pious, mystically trained and a good administrator, able to direct and guide a team of shilpis, stonecutters, carvers, sculptors, woodworkers, etc. See: Shilpa Shastras, Stapatyaveda.

Sthatyaveda: (Sanskrit) "Science of architecture." A class of writings on architecture, sometimes classed as one of the Upavedas. It embodies such works as the Manasara, the Vastu Shastras and the architectural Shilpa Shastra. See: Upaveda.

sthiti: (Sanskrit) "Preservation." See: Nataraja.

sthula sharira: (Sanskrit) "Gross or physical body." The odic body. See: actinic, actinodic, kosha, odic, subtle body.

stingy (stinginess): Miserly. Unwilling or reluctant to give or spend.

Stoics: Ancient Greek philosophers who held that all things are governed by natural laws and that the wise follow virtue and remain aloof from the external world and its passions.

straits: A narrow waterway; a difficult, dangerous experience or passage in life.

stranglehold: Any action that suppresses freedom or cuts off life.

stratification: "Making layers." The process of organizing or arranging in layers or levels.

stri dharma: (Sanskrit) "Womanly conduct." See: dharma.

Subala Upanishad: (Sanskrit) Belongs to the Shukla Yajur Veda. A dialog between sage Subala and Brahma about the Supreme Being as Narayana.

subatomic: Of the inner parts of atoms; anything smaller than an atom.

subconscious mind: Samskara chitta. See: aura, conscience, mind (five states).

subjective: Personal. Of or colored by the personality, state of mind etc., of the observer (subject). Opposite of objective. Cf: objective.

sublime: Noble, grand. Inspiring awe or reverence.

subliminal: Below the threshold of consciousness or apprehension, such as an attitude of which one is not aware. Subconscious. See: mind (five states).

Subramanya: (Sanskrit) "Very pious; dear to holy men." A Name of Lord Karttikeya. See: karttikeya.

Subramuniyaswami: Current and 162nd satguru (1927) of the Nandinatha Sampradaya's Kailasa Parampara. He was ordained Sivaya Subramuniyaswami by Sage Yogaswami on the full-moon day of May 12, 1949, in Jaffna, Sri Lanka, at 6:21 pm. This was just days after he had attained nirvikalpa samadhi in the caves of Jalani. Yogaswami, then 77, ordained the 22-year old yogi with a tremendous slap on the back, saying, "This will be heard in America," and conferring upon him the mission to bring the fullness of Saivism to the West. Local devotees called the initiation a coronation. That same year, while still in Sri Lanka, Subramuniyaswami founded the Saiva Siddhanta Yoga Order and Saiva Siddhanta Church at the Sri Subramuniya Ashrama in Alaveddy. Returning to America, he spent the next six years preparing for his teaching mission through intense sadhana and tapas. He began actively teaching in 1957 when he founded the Himalayan Academy. In 1970, he established his international headquarters and monastery complex, Kauai Aadheenam, on Hawaii's Garden Island of Kauai. Five years later, he designated a portion of the 51-acre holy site as the San Marga Sanctuary, future site of Iraivan Temple, carved of white granite stone in Bangalore, India. To spearhead a growing Hindu renaissance, he founded Hinduism Today in 1979, an international monthly, full-color magazine acclaimed the world over as the the greatest advent in Hindu publishing this century. In August of 1986, the World Religious Parliament in New Delhi honored Subramuniyaswami as one of five Hindu spiritual leaders outside of India who had most dynamically promoted Sanatana Dharma in the past 25 years. He was given the title Jagadacharya, "World Teacher." In 1995 the Parliament bestowed on him the title of Dharmachakra for his remarkable publications. In April of 1988, he was selected to represent Hinduism at the five-day Global Forum of Spiritual and Parliamentary Leaders for Human Survival, held in England at Oxford University, and again in Moscow from January 11 to 15, 1990; and in Brazil, June 57, 1992. At Chicago's historic centenary Parliament of the World's Religions in

September, 1993, he was elected to the Presidents' Assembly, a core group of 25 men and women representing the world's faiths. In late 1996 Gurudeva transformed "Hinduism Today" to a magazine, a quantum leap that extended its global reach and impact in Hindu communities. In 1997 he responded to President Bill Clinton's call for religious opinions on the ethics of human cloning and spearheaded the 125th anniversary and diaspora pilgrimage of Sri Lanka's Sage Yogaswami. In Kerala, the Vishwa Hindu Parishad honored him as "The Hindu Voice of the Century." Throughout that same year he was a key member of Vision Kauai, a small group of indigenous and political leaders meeting to fashion the island's future based on ethical values.

- Over the years Subramuniyaswami has written hundreds of tracts and books, which have been distributed in the tens of thousands in many languages. Especially in the 1980s, he lectured worldwide and established the worship in numerous Hindu temples. Gurudeva teaches the traditional Saivite Hindu path to enlightenment, a path that leads the soul from simple service to worshipful devotion to God, from the disciplines of meditation and yoga to the direct knowing of Divinity within. His insights into the nature of consciousness provide a key for quieting the external mind and revealing to aspirants their deeper states of being, which are eternally perfect, full of light, love, serenity and wisdom. He urges all seekers to live a life of ahimsa, harmlessness towards nature, people and creatures, an ethic which includes vegetarianism. From his ashrama in Hawaii, Gurudeva continues to follow his satguru's instruction to bring Saivism to the Western world by teaching others to "know thy Self by thyself" and thus "see God Siva everywhere." Through the ordained swamis of the Saiva Siddhanta Yoga Order, he trains young men in the ancient path of brahmacharya, enlightenment and service to humanity. Over 30 full-time monks, along with extended family groups in eight countries, have joined to fulfill this parampara's mission to further monistic Saiva Siddhanta and Hindu solidarity.
- The name Subramuniya is a Tamil spelling of the Sanskrit Shubhramunya (not to be confused with Subramanya). It is formed from shubhra meaning "light; intuition," and muni, "silent sage." Ya means "restraint; religious meditation." Thus, Subramuniya means a self-restrained soul who remains silent or, when he speaks, speaks out from intuition.

subside: To become less active or less intense. To abate.

substance: Essence; real nature.

substratum: "Layer underneath." In geology, the layer of rock or other matter forming the foundation of a landscape and acting as its support. In philosophy, that which is "underneath," not visible but the support for all of existence, the substance or underlying force which is the foundation of any and all manifestation: Satchidananda. See: Parashakti, Satchidananda, tattva.

sub-subconscious mind: Vasana chitta. See: mind (five states).

subsuperconscious mind: Anukarana chitta. See: kala, mind, tattvas.

subtle body: Sukshma sharira, the nonphysical, astral body or vehicle in which the soul encases itself to function in the Antarloka, or subtle world. The subtle body includes the pranamaya, manomaya and vijnanamaya koshas if the soul is physically embodied. It consists of only manomaya and vijnanamaya after death, when pranamaya kosha disintegrates. And it consists of only vijnanamaya kosha when manomaya kosha is dropped off just before rebirth or when higher evolutionary planes are entered. Also part of the subtle body are the antahkarana (mental faculty: intellect, instinct and ego--buddhi, manas and ahamkara), the five jnanendriyas (agents of perception: hearing, touch, sight, taste and smell); and the five karmendriyas (agents of action: speech, grasping, movement, excretion and generation). See: indriya, jiva, kosha.

subtle plane: See: loka, three worlds.

successor: A person who follows another, in office or title, as the successor to a satguru or king. --**succession:** A number of persons or things coming one after another in order; e.g., a spiritual succession. See: guru parampara.

suchi: (Sanskrit) "Needle; sharp point." An index: that which reveals a book.

suicide: "Self-killing." In Sanskrit, pranatyaga, "abandoning life force." Intentionally ending one's own life through poisoning, drowning, burning, jumping, shooting, etc. Suicide has traditionally been condemned in Hindu scripture because, being an abrupt escape from life, it creates unseemly karma to face in the future. However, in cases of terminal disease or great disability, religious self-willed death through fasting--prayopavesha--is permitted. The person making such a decision declares it publicly, which allows for community regulation and distinguishes the act from suicide performed privately in traumatic emotional states of anguish and despair. Ancient lawgivers cite various stipulations: 1) inability to perform normal bodily purification; 2) death appears imminent or the condition is so bad that life's pleasures are nil; 3) the action must be done under community regulation. The gradual nature of prayopavesha is a key factor distinguishing it from sudden suicide, svadehaghata ("murdering one's body"), for it allows time for the individual to settle

all differences with others, to ponder life and draw close to God, as well as for loved ones to oversee the person's gradual exit from the physical world. In the ideal, highly ritualized practice, one begins by obtaining forgiveness and giving forgiveness. Next a formal vow, mahavrata-marana, "great vow of death," is given to one's guru, following a full discussion of all karmas of this life, especially fully and openly confessing one's wrongdoings. Thereafter, attention is to be focused on scripture and the guru's noble teachings. Meditation on the innermost, immortal Self becomes the full focus as one gradually abstains from food. At the very end, as the soul releases itself from the body, the sacred mantra is repeated as instructed by the preceptor. See: death, penance, reincarnation, soul, prayopavesha.

sukshma sharira: (Sanskrit) "Subtle body," or astral body. See: actinic, actinodic, kosha, odic, soul, subtle body.

sully (sullied): To make dirty, or impure. See: purity-impurity.

Sundaranathar: (Tamil) "Beautiful lord." Original name of Natha Siddha Tirumular before he trekked to South India from the Himalayas. See: Tirumular.

Sundarar: (Tamil) "Beautiful." One of the four Tamil Samayacharyas (ca 800), and composer of devotional hymns to God Siva, which form the seventh book of the Tirumurai. In these, he pleads forth-rightly to Siva for material as well as spiritual abundance. See: Nalvar, Nayanar, Tirumurai.

superconscious mind: Karana chitta. See: kala, mind (five states), mind (three phases), Satchidananda, tattva.

supernatural: Beyond or transcending the natural laws of the physical cosmos. Of or relating to an order of existence beyond the visible universe, referring to events, agencies or knowledge superseding or mystically explaining the laws of nature. See: mysticism, shamanism.

supplicate (supplication): To ask for humbly. To earnestly pray for.

Suprabheda Agama: (Sanskrit) One of the 28 Saiva Siddhanta Agamas, this scripture discusses temple worship, especially personal devotions, festivals, practices and initiations for each stage of life. A total of 4,666 verses have been preserved from the original scripture.

Supreme God: Highest God, the source or creator of all other Gods, beings and all manifestation.

supreme: Highest in rank, power, authority.

Suradas: (Sanskrit) Blind North-Indian Vaishnava poet (ca 1550), famous for his devotional hymns to Lord Krishna. His massive writing Sursagar, "Sur's Ocean," is widely read.

surpass: To excel; to be superior to.

surrender: Giving up or yielding. Surrender to the Divine is called prapatti, a complete giving over of oneself to God's will in total trust and abandonment. See: bhakti, prapatti, sacrifice.

Surya: (Sanskrit) "Sun." One of the principal Divinities of the Vedas, also prominent in the epics and Puranas. Saivites revere Surya, the Sun God each morning as Siva Surya. Smartas and Vaishnavas revere the golden orb as Surya Narayana. As the source of light, the sun is the most readily apparent image of Divinity available to man. As the giver of life, Surya is worshiped during harvest festivals everywhere. Esoterically, the sun represents the point where the manifest and unmanifest worlds meet or unite. In yoga, the sun represents the masculine force, pingala. Surya also signifies the Self within. In the Vedic description of the course of souls after death, the "path of the sun" leads liberated souls to the realm of Brahman; while the path of the moon leads back to physical birth.

sushumna nadi: (Sanskrit) "Most gracious channel." Central psychic nerve current within the spinal column. See: kundalini, nadi, samadhi.

sustainable: Maintainable; able to be kept up or continued consistently over a period of time.

sustenance (to sustain): Support. That which preserves life, or gives strength. Nourishment.

Suta Samhita: (Sanskrit) A chapter of the Skanda Purana dealing in part with philosophy.

sutala: (Sanskrit) "Great depth." Region of obsessive jealousy and retaliation. The third chakra below the muladhara, centered in the knees. Corresponds to the third astral netherworld beneath the earth's surface, called Samhata ("abandoned") or Sutala. See: chakra, loka, Naraka.

sutra: (Sanskrit) "Thread." An aphoristic verse; the literary style consisting of such maxims. From 500 bce, this style was widely adopted by Indian philosophical systems and eventually employed in works on law, grammar, medicine, poetry, crafts, etc. Each sutra is often accompanied by a commentary called bhashya and sometimes subcommentary called tika, vyakhyana or tippani. Through the media of short, concise, easily memorized sutras, vast amounts of knowledge were preserved. Reciting relevant sutra texts from memory is a daily sadhana in various Hindu arts

and sciences. Sutra also names the wife's wedding pendant (mangala sutra). See: bhashya, wedding pendant.

svadharma: (Sanskrit) "One's own way." See: dharma.

svadhishthana: (Sanskrit) "One's own base." See: chakra.

svadhyaya: (Sanskrit) "Self-reflection; scriptural study." See: yama-niyama.

svarga: (Sanskrit) "Abode of light." An intermediate realm of the Antarloka; a term essentially synonymous with Svarloka. See: loka.

Svarloka: (Sanskrit) "Celestial or bright plane." The third of the seven upper worlds, the mid-astral region (equated in some texts with Svarga), realm of manipura chakra. See: loka.

Svatmarama: (Sanskrit) See: Hatha Yoga Pradipika.

svayambhu Linga: (Sanskrit) "Self-existent mark or sign of God." Names a Sivalinga discovered in nature and not carved or crafted by human hands; often a smooth cylindrical stone, called banalinga, such as found in India's Narmada River. See: Sivalinga.

Svayambhuva Agama: (Sanskrit) One of the 28 Saiva Siddhanta Agamas. See: Saiva Agama.

Svayambhuva Sutra(s): (Sanskrit) A subsidiary text of the Saiva Agamas.

Svetashvatara Upanishad: (Sanskrit) An Upanishad of the Yajur Veda that emphasizes theism--personal God and devotion--and at the same time monism--the unity of God, soul and world. It is valued as a major Upanishad, among the greatest panentheist writings, especially precious to Saivite schools.

swami: (Sanskrit) "Lord; owner." He who knows or is master of himself. A respectful title for a Hindu monk, usually a sannyasin, an initiated, orange-robed renunciate, dedicated wholly to religious life. As a sign of respect, the term swami is sometimes applied more broadly to include nonmonastics dedicated to spiritual work. See: monk, sannyasa dharma, sannyasin.

Swami Sivananda: (Sanskrit) One of Hinduism's most influential modern-day saints (1887-1963). He was born in South India, practiced medicine in Malaysia, published a medical journal, became administrator of a hospital and later renounced the world. He was initiated by Swami Vishvananda Sarasvati at Rishikesh in 1924, and founded the Divine Life Society in 1939, which has branches in many countries today. He has been a powerful force in spreading Hindu teachings in India and

abroad through his many books and the travels of his numerous swamis. Emphasized hatha and raja yoga and a broad, universal form of Hinduism.

swamini: (Sanskrit) The feminine equivalent of the term swami. See: monastic, nunk, sannyasa, swami.

swastika (svastika): (Sanskrit) "Sign of auspiciousness," From su ("wellness," "auspiciousness") and astu, "be it so." The ancient Hindu symbol of good fortune, representing the sun. The right-angled arms of the swastika denote the indirect way Divinity is reached--through intuition, not by intellect. It has been a prominent icon in many cultures. See: murti.

swirl: To move in a whirling, circular motion, like a whirlpool.

symbolism: The representation of one thing by something else. E.g., the damaru, Siva's drum, is a symbol of creation.

syncretism: A combination of various beliefs and practices, often of opposing views formed into a one creed or system of belief, typically marked by inconsistencies. See: universalist.

synonymous: Having the same or similar meaning. Quality of two words or phrases whose meanings are identical.

synthesis: A combining of various parts to make a whole.

T

Tagore, Rabindranath: One of India's most highly acclaimed modern-day writers and poets (1861-1941), son of Devendranath Tagore. He wrote in Bengali and in English. His most famous poetic religious work is Gitanjali, which centers around dialogs between the soul and God Vishnu. He received the Nobel Prize for literature in 1913.

tainted: Sullied, spoiled or stained. Morally corrupt or depraved.

Tai Pongal: (Tamil) A four-day home festival held in the Tamil month of Tai (January-February), celebrating the season's first harvest. Surya, the Sun God, is honored at this time as the giver of all good fortune and as the visible Divine One. Newly harvested rice is ceremoniously cooked outdoors over an open fire in a giant pot (hence pongal, from pongu, "to cook"). The direction of the overflow of boiling milk is an augury for the coming year.

Tai Pusam: (Tamil) A festival held on the Pushya nakshatra near the full-moon day of January-February to worship Lords Siva or Karttikeya, depending on the locality. It is an important holiday, especially dear to the Tamil people, celebrated with great pomp, fervor and intensity in India, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Fiji, South Africa and Reunion, often marked by the carrying of kavadi. In Mauritius and Singapore it is a national holiday. See: kavadi, Karttikeya.

Taittiriya Aranyaka: (Sanskrit) A forest treatise of Krishna Yajur Veda. See: Veda.

Taittiriya Samhita: (Sanskrit) See: Yajur Veda.

Taittiriya Upanishad: (Sanskrit) Belongs to the Taittiriya Brahmana of the Yajur Veda and is divided into three sections called valli(s). The first deals with phonetics and pronunciation, the second and third with Brahman and the attainment of bliss.

tala: (Sanskrit) "Plane or world; level; base, bottom." Root of the name of the seven realms of lower consciousness centered in the seven chakras below the muladhara. See: chakra, hell, purgatory, loka, Naraka.

talatala chakra: (Sanskrit) "Lower region." The fourth chakra below the muladhara, centered in the calves. Region of chronic mental confusion and unreasonable stubbornness. Corresponds to the fourth astral netherworld beneath the earth's surface, called Tamisra ("darkness") or Talatala. This state of consciousness is born of the sole motivation of self-preservation. See: chakra, loka, Naraka.

tamas(ic): (Sanskrit) "Force of inertia." See: guna.

Tamil: (Tamil) The ancient Dravidian language of the Tamils, a Caucasoid people of South India and Northern Sri Lanka, who have now migrated throughout the world. The official language of the state of Tamil Nadu, India. See: race.

Tamil Nadu: (Tamil) State in South India, 50,000 square miles, population 55 million. Land of countless holy scriptures, saints, sages and over 40,000 magnificent temples, including Chidambaram, Madurai, Palani Hills and Rameshvaram.

tandava: (Sanskrit) "Violent dance." Any vigorous dance sequence performed by a male dancer. There are many forms of tandava. Its prototype is Siva's dance of bliss, ananda tandava. The more sublime, female dance is called lasya, from lasa, "lively." Dance in general is nartana. See: Nataraja.

tantra: (Sanskrit) "Loom, methodology." 1) Most generally, a synonym for shastra, "scripture." 2) A synonym for the Agamic texts, especially those of the Shakta faith, a class of Hindu scripture providing detailed instruction on all aspects of religion, mystic knowledge and science. The tantras are also associated with the Saiva tradition. 3) A specific method, technique or spiritual practice within the Saiva and Shakta traditions. For example, pranayama is a tantra. Tantra generally involves a reversal of the normal flow of energies. Its perspective is that the inner self is most important, and outer life is secondary. Tantra causes the life force to flow up through the sushumna. Many are the methods for overcoming the unovercomeable. Fallen into the hands of the unscrupulous, these techniques become black magic (abhichara).

Tantraloka: (Sanskrit) One of the most comprehensive and authoritative expositions of Kashmir Saivism, written by Abhinavagupta. See: Abhinavagupta, Kashmir Saivism.

tantrika: (Sanskrit) (Anglicized: tantric.) Adjectival form for practices prescribed in the Tantra traditions. The name of a follower of any of the tantric traditions. See: tantra, tantrism.

tantrism: The enlightenment path outlined in the Tantra scriptures. 1) Tantrism is sometimes considered a parallel stream of history and tradition in Hinduism, running alongside and gradually interweaving with the Vedic brahminical tradition. 2) Tantrism refers to traditions, mainly within Saivism and Shaktism, that focus on the arousal of the kundalini force, and which view the human body as a vehicle of the Divine and an instrument for liberation. Tantrism's ultimate aim is a channeling of the kundalini life force through the sushumna, the gracious channel, upwards into the sahasrara chakra and beyond, through the door of brahman (brahmarandhra) into Parasiva, either before or at the time of death. The stress is on the transformation of all spheres of consciousness, spiritual, psychic, emotional and material. It is a path of sadhana. 3) --**Shakta Tantrism:** Brings a strong emphasis on the worship of the feminine force. Depending on the school, this may be symbolic

or literal in rites involving sexual intercourse, etc. Shakta Tantrism's main principle is the use of the material to gain the spiritual. In certain schools, historically, this implies embracing that which is normally forbidden and manipulating the forces to attain transcendent consciousness rather than lower consciousness. There are three main streams: 1) the right-hand path (dakshina marga or dakshinachara) of conservative Hindu practice, 2) the left-hand path (vama marga or vamachara) involving the use of things normally forbidden such as taking intoxicants, meat, ritual sex, etc., and 3) the yogic path of the Kaula sect. Gorakshanatha followers are sometimes grouped with the latter. See: Shaktism, kundalini, raja yoga, tantra.

Tao: "The way." The central concept of the Chinese religion called Taoism. Though traditionally considered impossible to translate, Tao is often rendered as "cosmic order," akin to the Sanskrit rita. See: dharma.

tapas: (Sanskrit) "Warmth, heat," hence psychic energy, spiritual fervor or ardor. 1) Purificatory spiritual disciplines, severe austerity, penance and sacrifice. The endurance of pain, suffering, through the performance of extreme penance, religious austerity and mortification. By comparison, sadhana is austerity of a simple, sustained kind, while tapas is austerity of a severe, psyche-transforming nature. Tapas is extreme bodily mortification, long term sadhanas, such as meditating under a tree in one place for 12 years, taking a lifetime vow of silence and never speaking or writing, or standing on one leg for a prescribed number of years. Scriptures warn against extreme asceticism that harm the body. 2) On a deeper level, tapas is the intense inner state of kundalini "fire" which stimulates mental anguish and separates the individual from society. Life does not go on as usual when this condition occurs. The association with a satguru, Sadasiva, brings the devotee into tapas; and it brings him out of it. The fire of tapas burns on the dross of sanchita karmas. This is the source of heat, dismay, depression and striving until final and total surrender, prapatti. The individual can mollify this heated condition by continuing his regular sadhana as outlined by the guru. The fires of self-transformation may be stimulated by the practice of tapas, or come unbidden. One can "do" tapas, but the true tapas is a condition of being and consciousness which is a state of grace, bringing positive change, transformation and purification of one's nature. Guru bhakti is the only force that can cool the fires of tapas. See: kundalini, penance, sadhana.

tapasvin: (Sanskrit) One who performs tapas or is in the state of tapas. See: tapas.

Tapoloka: (Sanskrit) "Plane of austerity." The second highest of the seven upper worlds, realm of ajna chakra. See: loka.

tarnished: Dulled, sullied, spoiled, lacking luster.

Tat: (Sanskrit) "That; the indescribable Absolute; supreme."

Tatparyadipika: (Sanskrit) A commentary by Srikumara (ca 1100) on the Tattvaparakasha of Sri Bhojadeva Paramara (1018-1060), a philosopher-king in Central India who expounded Saiva Siddhanta. Srikumara upheld the monistic basis of Bhojadeva's work, while later commentator Aghorasiva reinterpreted it in dualistic terms. See: Aghorasiva, Saiva Siddhanta.

Tat Sat: (Sanskrit) "That is Truth." A terse phrase pointing to the inexpressible truth of which nothing more can be said.

tattva: (Sanskrit) "That-ness" or "essential nature." Tattvas are the primary principles, elements, states or categories of existence, the building blocks of the universe. Lord Siva constantly creates, sustains the form of and absorbs back into Himself His creations. Rishis describe this emanational process as the unfoldment of tattvas, stages or evolutes of manifestation, descending from subtle to gross. At mahapralaya, cosmic dissolution, they enfold into their respective sources, with only the first two tattvas surviving the great dissolution. The first and subtlest form--the pure consciousness and source of all other evolutes of manifestation--is called Siva tattva, or Parashakti-nada. But beyond Siva tattva lies Parasiva--the utterly transcendent, Absolute Reality, called attava. That is Siva's first perfection. The Sankhya system discusses 25 tattvas. Saivism recognizes these same 25 plus 11 beyond them, making 36 tattvas in all. These are divided into three groups: 1) First are the five shuddha (pure) tattvas. These constitute the realm of shuddha maya. 2) Next are the seven shuddha-ashuddha (pure-impure) tattvas. These constitute the realm of shuddhashuddha maya. 3) The third group comprises the 24 ashuddha (impure) tattvas. These constitute the realm of ashuddha maya.

- --**The shuddha tattvas: Actinic or spiritual energy.** This is the superconscious realm, also known as shuddha (pure) maya or mahamaya. Bindu, transcendent light, is the "material" cause of this pure sphere. This is the Sivaloka, the region of the 330 million Gods, the myriad rishis and other beings who have attained freedom from the triple bondage.
- 1) **Siva tattva:** "auspiciousness," of two parts: the higher is Parashakti, "Supreme Energy," from which emerges primal sound, nada (more precisely Paranada, soundless sound). Though most often referred to as sound, nada is more mystically known as movement, the first impulse arising from perfect quiescence, the first "thing" out of the motionless Self. This is Siva's second perfection, Parashakti, superconsciousness, the mind of God. The Siva tattva pervades all other 35 categories and possesses the powers of will, knowledge and action (iccha, jnana, kriya).

- 2) **Shakti tattva:** energy, corresponds to bindu, light, the cause of form (more precisely Parabindu, primal nucleus). This is the tattva of Parameshvara, the Primal Soul, father-mother God, Siva's third perfection, who after mahapralaya remains transfixed in deep samadhi, until He again emanates the universe through His Cosmic Dance.
- 3) **Sadasiva tattva:** the power of revealing grace. In this realm the energies of knowledge and action are in perfect equilibrium. This is the realm of the anandamaya kosha.
- 4) **Ishvara tattva:** the energy of concealment, concealing grace. The energy of action prevails over that of knowledge in order to arouse cosmic activity in its subtle form.
- 5) **shuddhavidya tattva:** pure knowledge, dharma. This is a level of manifestation in which the energy of action is in abeyance and the energy of knowledge prevails. Shuddhavidya tattva includes Siva's other three powers or aspects: Rudra (destruction), Vishnu (preservation) and Brahma (creation).
- --**The shuddhashuddha tattvas: Actinodic, or spiritual-magnetic, energy.** The seven tattvas from maya to purusha make up the shuddhashuddha (pure-impure) realm.
- 6) **maya tattva:** mirific energy, the "material" cause of the "impure sphere." The category of maya brings into being as its immediate aids the following five tattvas, known as the "five sheaths," pancha kanchuka, of the individual soul, purusha. Collectively they make up the vijnanamaya kosha, or mental body.
- 7) **kala tattva:** the phenomenon of time, which divides all experience into past, present and future.
- 8) **niyati tattva:** karmic destiny; necessity; order; law of cause and effect; restraint.
- 9) **kala tattva:** creativity, aptitude, the power which draws the soul toward spiritual knowledge. Its energy partially removes the veil of anava which clouds the inherent powers of the soul.
- 10) **vidya tattva:** limited knowledge, the power which gives the soul practical knowledge in accord with its present life experiences.

- 11) **raga tattva:** attachment, the arousal of desire, without which no experience of the objective world is possible.
- 12) **purusha tattva:** soul identity; soul connected with subjectivity. Through identification with the five above "sheaths," the soul, atman, becomes a purusha, or bound soul, capable of experiencing the higher Antarloka as a limited individual. This five-fold sheath is called the pancha kanchuka, or vijnanamaya kosha (mental body).
- --**ashuddha tattvas: Odic, or magnetic, energy.** These 24 categories make up the "world" of ashuddha (impure) maya. This is the realm of the astral and physical planes, in which souls function through the manomaya, pranamaya and annamaya koshas, depending on their level of embodiment.
- 13) **prakriti tattva:** primal nature, the gross energy of which all lower tattvas are formed. Prakriti, also called pradhana, is expressed as three gunas (qualities)--sattva, rajas and tamas. These manifest as light, activity and inertia, respectively; and on the subtle level as pleasure, sorrow and delusion. These gunas dominate the soul's powers of knowledge, action and desire (jnana, kriya and iccha), and form the guna body, manomaya kosha.
- --antahkarana: the mental faculty. 14) **buddhi tattva:** judgment, intellect, the faculty of discrimination. 15) **ahamkara tattva:** egoism, sense of I-ness in the external form. It is the fundamental principle of individuality. 16) **manas tattva:** the instinctive mind, the receiving and directing link between the outer senses and the inner faculties.
- --jnanendriya: the five cognitive senses, of the nature of sattva guna. Each has a subtle and physical aspect. 17) **shrotra tattva:** hearing (ears). 18) **tvak tattva:** touching (skin). 19) **chakshu tattva:** seeing (eyes). 20) **rasana tattva:** tasting (tongue). 21) **ghrana tattva:** smelling (nose).
- --karmendriya: the five organs of action, of the nature of rajaguna. Each has a subtle and physical aspect. 22) **vak tattva:** speech (voice). 23) **pani tattva:** grasping (hands). 24) **pada tattva:** walking (feet). 25) **payu tattva:** excretion (anus). 26) **upastha tattva:** procreation (genitals).
- --tanmatra: the five subtle elements, of the nature of tamaguna. 27) **shabda tattva:** sound. 28) **sparsha tattva:** feel. 29) **rupa tattva:** form. 30) **rasa**

- tattva:** taste. 31) **gandha tattva:** odor. These are the subtle characteristics of the five gross elements, akasha, vayu, tejas, apas and prithivi, respectively.
- --panchabhuta: the five gross elements. 32) **akasha tattva:** ether or space. 33) **vayu tattva:** air. 34) **tejas tattva:** fire. 35) **apas tattva** (or jala): water. 36) **prithivi tattva:** earth. See: atattva, antahkarana, guna, kosha, Siva (also, charts at end of lexicon).

Tattva Prakasha: (Sanskrit) "Illumination of the categories." Text of 76 verses by the philosopher-king Bhoja Paramara which systematized and consolidated monistic Saiva Siddhanta in the 11th century.

tattvatrayi: (Sanskrit) "Essential triad." Names the primary categories of Saiva and Shakta schools, Pati (God), pashu (soul) and pasha (world, or bonds). See: padartha, Pati-pashu-pasha.

Tayumanavar: (Tamil) A Tamil Saivayogi, devotional mystic and poet saint (ca 17th century) whose writings are a harmonious blend of philosophy and devotion. In his poem "Chinmayananda Guru," Tayumanavar places himself in the genealogy of Rishi Tirumular. See: Tirumular.

temper: To reduce in intensity or moderate by the addition of other qualities. Also, the quality of anger, or the propensity to become angry. See: chakra.

temple: An edifice in a consecrated place dedicated to the worship of God or the Gods. From the Latin templum, "temple, sanctuary; marked space." Hindu temples, over one million worldwide, are revered as sacred, magical places in which the three worlds most consciously commune--structures especially built and consecrated to channel the subtle spiritual energies of inner-world beings. The temple's psychic atmosphere is maintained through regular worship ceremonies (puja) invoking the Deity, who uses His installed image (murti) as a temporary body to bless those living on the earth plane. In Hinduism, the temple is the hub of virtually all aspects of social and religious life. It may be referred to by the Sanskrit terms mandira, devalaya (or Sivalaya, a Siva temple), as well as by vernacular terms such as koyil (Tamil). See: garbhagriha, darshana, mandapa, pradakshina, sound, teradi, tirthayatra.

temporal: Referring to time; subject to time. Passing, existing only for a time.

tend: Having a tendency or inclination to do something.

teradi: (Tamil) "Chariot shed." Tamil term for the building that houses the temple cart or chariot (ter) in which the parade Deity, utsava murti, is taken in procession on festival days.

terminable: Which can be ended. Not lasting forever.

terminal: Concluding, ending, final.

terminal illness: Incurable disease, ending in death. See: death, suicide.

That: When capitalized, this simple demonstrative refers uniquely to the Ultimate, Indescribable or Nameless Absolute. The Self God, Parasiva. It is the English equivalent of Tat, as in, Tat tvam asi, "You are That!"

theism: Belief that God exists as a real, conscious, personal Supreme Being, creator and ruler of the universe. May also include belief in the Gods.

theology: The study of religious doctrines, specifically of the nature of God, soul and world. --**theologians:** Those who study, are expert in or formulate theology. Cf: metaphysics.

thither: Toward that place; there. Farther.

thou/thy: Poetic, Old English alternates for you/your. Thy is the possessive form of thou. Often used in religious writing or translation of devotional scripture as an expression of respect and veneration not conveyed in the ordinary pronouns you and your.

three worlds: The three worlds of existence, triloka, are the primary hierarchical divisions of the cosmos. 1) Bhuloka: "Earth world," the physical plane. 2) Antarloka: "Inner or in-between world," the subtle or astral plane. 3) Sivaloka: "World of Siva," and of the Gods and highly evolved souls; the causal plane, also called Karanaloka.

- The three-world cosmology is readily found in Hindu scriptures. In the major Upanishads of the Vedas we find numerous citations, with interesting variations. Verse 1.5.17 of the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad states, "Now, there are, verily, three worlds, the world of men (Manushyaloka), the world of the fathers (Pitriloka) and the world of the Gods (Devaloka)..." Later, verse 6.2.15 refers to the two higher worlds as the Devaloka and the Brahmaloka. The Katha Upanishad, verse 2.3.8, omitting the world of men, lists the Pitriloka, the Gandharvaloka (world of genies or elementals) and the Brahmaloka (world of God). Another perspective of three worlds is offered in the Prashna Upanishad 3.8, which lists the world of good (Punyaloka), the world of evil (Papaloka) and the world of men (Manushyaloka).

- Scriptures offer several other cosmological perspectives, most importantly seven upper worlds (sapta urdhvaloka) and seven lower worlds (sapta adholoka), which correspond to the 14 chakras and make up the "world-egg of God," the universe, called Brahmanda. The seven upper worlds are Bhuloka, Bhuvarloka, Svarloka, Maharloka, Janaloka, Tapoloka and Satyaloka. The second, third and fourth comprise the subtle plane. The highest three comprise the causal plane. The seven lower worlds, collectively known as Naraka or Patala, are (from highest to lowest) Put, Avichi, Samhata, Tamisra, Rijisha, Kudmala and Kakola.
- From the Saiva Agamic perspective of the 36 tattvas, the pure sphere, shuddha maya--the first five tattvas--is subdivided into 33 planes of existence. The "pure-impure" realm, shuddhashuddha maya--the seven tattvas from maya tattva to purusha--contains 27 planes of existence. The ashuddha ("impure") realm--of 24 tattvas--has 56 planes of existence. See: chakra, loka, Naraka, tattva (also: individual loka entries).

thwart: To hinder, obstruct or frustrate.

thy: See: thou/thy.

tilaka: (Sanskrit) "Sesamum-like mark," from tila, "sesame seed." Distinctive marks made on the forehead or the brow with clay, ashes or sandalwood paste as an indication of sectarian affiliation. Vaishnavas wear a vertical v-shaped tilaka made of clay. The Saivite tilaka, called tripundra, is three horizontal strips of holy ash with a dot below the middle of the forehead. Wearing the tilaka is an expression of religious affiliation and pride in one's beliefs, not unlike the Christian's cross or the Jew's yarmulke. Elaborate tilakas are worn by Hindus today mainly at religious events and when on pilgrimage, though many Hindus wear the simple dot (bindu) on the forehead, indicating that they are Hindu, even when moving in the general public. See: bindu, Hinduism, tripundra.

timeless: Outside the condition of time, or not measurable in terms of time.

tirobhava: (Sanskrit) "Concealment," same as tirodhana. See: Nataraja, tirodhana shakti.

tirodhana shakti: (Sanskrit) "Concealing power." Veiling grace, or God's power to obscure the soul's divine nature. Tirodhana shakti is the particular energy of Siva that binds the three bonds of anava, karma, maya to the soul. It is a purposeful

limiting of consciousness to give the opportunity to the soul to grow and mature through experience of the world. See: evolution of the soul, grace.

tirthayatra: (Sanskrit) "Journeying to a holy place." Pilgrimage. One of the five sacred duties (pancha nitya karmas) of the Hindu is to journey periodically to one of the innumerable holy spots in India or other countries. Preceded by fasting and continence, it is a time of austerity and purification, when all worldly concerns are set aside and God becomes one's singular focus. Streams of devout pilgrims are received daily at the many ancient holy sites (tirthas) in India, and tens of thousands at festival times. See: pancha nitya karma, pancha shraddha.

tiru: (Tamil) "Sacred; holy." The exact Tamil equivalent of sri. Feminine equivalent is tirumati. See: sri.

Tirukural: (Tamil) "Holy couplets." A treasury of Hindu ethical insight and a literary masterpiece of the Tamil language, written by Saiva Saint Tiruvalluvar (ca 200 bce) near present-day Chennai. Its nonsectarian wisdom has been adopted by Christians, Muslims, Jains and even atheists. The text focuses primarily on the first three goals of life--artha (wealth), dharma (conduct) and kama (desire)--but also includes 13 chapters on renunciate dharma, relating to life's fourth goal, moksha (liberation). In an extraordinarily compact verse form of 14 syllables, the poet presents 133 subjects of ten verses each on relationships, human strengths and foibles, statecraft and more. One of the world's earliest ethical texts, the Tirukural could well be considered a bible on virtue for the human race. In fact, it is sworn on in South Indian courts of law. See: Tiruvalluvar.

Tirumantiram: (Tamil) "Holy incantation." The Nandinatha Sampradaya's oldest Tamil scripture; written ca 200 bce by Rishi Tirumular. It is the earliest of the Tirumurai, and a vast storehouse of esoteric yogic and tantric knowledge. It contains the mystical essence of raja yoga and siddha yoga, and the fundamental doctrines of the 28 Saiva Siddhanta Agamas, which in turn are the heritage of the ancient pre-historic traditions of Saivism. As the Agamas themselves are now partially lost, the Tirumantiram is a rare source of the complete Agamanta (collection of Agamic lore). Its 3047 verses were, as legend has it, composed in a rather extraordinary way. Before writing each verse, Tirumular would meditate for an entire year, then summarize his meditation in a four-line Tamil verse. He did this for 3,000 years! The allegory is said to mean that 3,000 years of knowledge is compacted in this one book. The text is organized in nine parts, called tantras, summarized as follows: 1) basic rules of religious morality; 2) allegorical explanations of Saiva mythological stories; five powers of Siva, three classifications of souls; 3) a complete treatise on raja yoga; 4) mantras and tantras; 5) the essential features of the Saiva religion; the four forms of Saivism, four stages, unorthodox paths, conduct to be avoided; 6) the Sivaguru, grace, renunciation, sin, penance, jnana, worthy and unworthy persons; 7) siddha yoga, more on grace, mudras, control of ida and pingala, worlds reached by different classes of yogis after death, refinements of yoga, the satguru; 8) essential theology:

five sheaths, eleven states, three padarthas (Pati-pashu-pasha), 36 tattvas, four states of consciousness, three malas, three gunas, ten karanas, etc.; 9) the fruits of realization, liberation, jnana, Siva's dances, meeting of the guru. See: Tirumurai, Tirumular.

Tirumular: (Tamil) An illustrious siddha yogi and rishi of the Nandinatha Sampradaya's Kailasa Parampara who came from the Himalayas (ca 200 bce) to Tamil Nadu to compose the Tirumantiram. In this scripture he recorded the tenets of Saivism in concise and precise verse form, based upon his own realizations and the supreme authority of the Saiva Agamas and the Vedas. Tirumular was a disciple of Maharishi Nandinatha. See: Tirumantiram, Kailasa Parampara, Vedanta.

Tirumurai: (Tamil) "Holy book." A twelve-book collection of hymns and writings of South Indian Saivite saints, compiled by Saint Nambiyandar Nambi (ca 1000). Of these, books 1-3 are the hymns of Saint Tirujnana Sambandar (ca 600). Books 4-6 are the hymns of Saint Tirunavakarasu (Appar), a contemporary of Sambandar. Book 7 contains the hymns of Saint Sundaramurti (ca 800). Book 8 contains the two works of Saint Manikkavasagar (9th century)--Tiruvagasam and Tirukovaiyar. Book 9 is the Tiruvisaippa and Tiruppallandu, which together comprise the works of nine saints. Book 10 is the Tirumantiram of Saint Tirumular (ca 200 bce). Book 11 contains the hymns of ten saints, including Saint Nakkirar and Nambiyandar Nambi, the compiler. Book 12 is the Periyapuramam by Saint Sekkilar (11th century), narrating the life story of the 63 Saiva Nayanar saints. The first seven books are known as Devarams.

Tiruvalluvar: (Tamil) "Holy weaver." Tamil weaver and householder saint (ca 200 bce) who wrote the classic Saivite ethical scripture Tirukural. He lived with his wife Vasuki, famed for her remarkable loyalty and virtues, near modern-day Chennai. There a memorial park, the Valluvar Kottam, enshrines his extraordinary verses in marble. See: Tirukural.

Tiruvagasam: (Tamil) "Holy Utterances." The lyrical Tamil scripture by Saint Manikkavasagar (ca 850). Considered one of the most profound and beautiful devotional works in the Tamil language, it discusses every phase of the spiritual path from doubt and anguish to perfect faith in God Siva, from earthly experience to the guru-disciple relationship and freedom from rebirth. The work is partly autobiographical, describing how Manikkavasagar, the prime minister to the Pandyan King, renounced the world after experiencing an extraordinary vision of Siva seated beneath a tree. The 658 hymns of Tiruvagasam together with the 400 hymns of Tirukovaiyar by the same author make up the eighth Tirumurai of Saiva Siddhanta scripture. See: Manikkavasagar, Tirumurai.

tithe (tithing): The spiritual discipline, often a vrata, of giving one tenth of one's gainful and gifted income to a religious organization of one's choice, thus sustaining spiritual education and upliftment on earth. The Sanskrit equivalent is

dashamamsha, called makimai in the Tamil tradition. Tithing is given not as an offering, but as "God's money." In olden days it was a portion of one's crops, such as one coconut out of ten. Immediately setting aside the tithe as soon as income is received sanctifies the remaining portion and reaps the greatest punya. It is an acknowledgement by faithful Hindus of God's providential care, bringing a greater awareness of God's power in the world. Because tithers are thus uplifted to a purer, spiritual consciousness, abundance naturally floods into their lives. Additional offerings should be given after this minimal obligation is paid. See: dashamamsha.

tithi: (Sanskrit) A lunar day, approximately one-thirtieth of the time it takes the moon to orbit the earth. Because of their means of calculation (based on the difference of the longitudinal angle between the position of sun and the moon), tithis may vary in length. There are 15 tithis in each fortnight (half month). The names of the tithis are Prathama (new moon), Dvitiya, Tritiya, Chaturthi, Panchami, Shashthi, Saptami, Ashtami, Navami, Dashami, Ekadashi, Dvadashi, Trayodashi, Chaturdashi, and lastly either Purnima (full moon) or Amavasya (new moon). These are sometimes prefixed to indicate either the dark (krishna) fortnight--when the moon is waning--or the light (shukla) fortnight--when the moon is waxing--e.g., Shukla-Navami. Most Hindu festivals are calculated according to the tithis.

touchstone: A test or criterion for determining value or authenticity.

trait: A quality or distinguishing peculiarity of character.

trance: In general, a condition of altered consciousness, accompanied by a lack of awareness to physical surroundings, neither a state of wakefulness nor sleep. In a religious sense it is a state of intense concentration, introspection or meditation. In such a state, called samadhi, body consciousness is completely lost as the energies are drawn up the spine into the sahasrara chakra at the crown of the head. Great prophets have gone into trance and spoken out predictions of the future and in their waking state later had no memory of what they had said. In spiritualism, trance describes the phenomenon in which an individual leaves the physical body, and a disincarnate being enters or takes control of the body, often giving forth verbal messages to others in attendance, as in a seance. Trance can be either voluntary or involuntary. See: mediumship, samadhi.

tranquil: Quiet, peaceful.

transcend: To go beyond one's limitations, e.g., "to transcend one's ego." Philosophically, to go beyond the limits of this world, or more profoundly, beyond time, form and space into the Absolute, the Self God.

transcendent: Surpassing the limits of experience or manifest form. In Saiva Siddhanta, a quality of God Siva as Absolute Reality, Parasiva, the Self. Distinguished from immanent. See: atattva, Parasiva.

transfix: To render motionless.

transgress: To overstep or break a law or ethical principle.

transient: That which is temporary, fleeting. Passing, not permanent.

transition: Passing from one condition or place to another. A synonym of death which implies, more correctly, continuity of the individual rather than his annihilation. See: death.

traverse: To move across or extend over.

treacherous: Dangerous, unreliable. Giving a false sense of safety.

tread: To walk on or across.

treatise: An article or book which systematically discusses a subject.

trepidation: Anxiety; fearful uncertainty. Trembling.

tribal: Relating to, or having the character of a tribe, a group, clan or village often related by ancestry, race or allegiance to a common leader or lineage. A term often used derogatorily to refer to so-called primitive peoples, but more accurately seen as the natural human social structure into which all villages and communities, ancient or modern, naturally organize. A term often used in reference to indigenous peoples, mostly shamanic in conviction, found worldwide from ancient times. See: pagan.

trickery: Deception, fraud. Creating illusion, such as by magic.

trident: Three-pronged spear. See: trishula.

Trikashasana: (Sanskrit) "Three teachings." Also, Trikashastra. A name for Kashmir Saivism based on its various philosophical triads including: Siva, Shakti and Nara (bound soul); Pati, pashu and pasha; three energies: highest (para), lowest (apara), and in-between (parapara); and three sets of scriptures. See: Kashmir Saivism.

trikona: (Sanskrit) A triangle; symbol of God Siva as Absolute Reality. Also represents the element fire.

triloka: (Sanskrit) "Three worlds." The physical, astral and causal planes (Bhuloka, Antarloka and Sivaloka). See: world, loka.

Trimurti: (Sanskrit) A classic representation of God as the three-fold Deity image-- Brahma, Vishnu and Rudra. See: Brahma.

triple bondage: See: mala, pasha.

tripundra: (Sanskrit) "Three marks." The Saivite sectarian mark, consisting of three horizontal lines of vibhuti (holy ash) on the brow, often with a dot (bindu) at the third eye. The three lines represent the soul's three bonds: anava, karma and maya. Holy ash, made of burnt cow dung, is a reminder of the temporary nature of the physical body and the urgency to strive for spiritual attainment and closeness to God. See: bindu, tilaka, vibhuti.

Trishula: (Sanskrit) A three-pronged spear or trident wielded by Lord Siva and certain Saivite ascetics. Symbolizes God's three fundamental shaktis or powers-- iccha (desire, will, love), kriya (action) and jnana (wisdom).

Truth: When capitalized, ultimate knowing which is unchanging. Lower case (truth): honesty, integrity; virtue.

Tryambaka: (Sanskrit) "Three-eyed one." A name of Rudra-Siva, one of the Ekadasha ("eleven") Rudras. His emblems include a water pot, chakra, drum, bow, goad, snake and trident. The grace of Tryambaka is beseeched in the famous Mritunjaya Mantra, or Siva Gayatri. Also the name of a disciple of Durvasas who disseminated advaita. See: Durvasas, Gayatri Mantra.

Tukaram: (Sanskrit) Among the most beloved and widely-read of Maharashtrian Sant poets (1598-1649) who wrote passionate songs urging devotees to seek the grace of Lord Vishnu.

Tulasidasa: (Sanskrit) Vaishnava sannyasin poet (ca 1532-1623) whose Sri Ramacharitamansa, a Hindi rendering of Valmiki's Sanskrit epic, Ramayana, is acclaimed one of the world's greatest literary works. See: Ramayana.

tumult: Noise, uproar, disturbance; agitation, confusion.

turbulent: Violently agitated. Marked by turmoil or wildly irregular motions.

turmeric: A plant of India, *Curcuma longa*, of the ginger family whose powdered rhizome is a prized seasoning and yellow dye. It has rich ayurvedic properties, is used in holy ritual and serves also to make kunkuma.

tyaf: A special bamboo-like script used for writing prayers to be conveyed to the inner worlds through the sacred fire. See: lekharpartha havana.

tyaga: (Sanskrit) "Letting go, detachment, renunciation." Described in the Bhagavad Gita as the basic principle of karma yoga, detachment from the fruits of one's actions. See: sacrifice, sannyasa, vairagya.

U

uccharana vyakhya: (Sanskrit) "Pronunciation key or explanation."

ucchishta: (Sanskrit) "Leavings; remainder." Religiously, the precious leavings from the guru's food plate or the waters from the bathing of his feet or sandals which are ingested by devotees as prasada (blessed offerings). Partaking of the satguru's ucchishta is an important means of receiving his vibration and thus creating a psychic connection and harmony with him, being in touch with his grace in a physical way. See: prasada, satguru, padapuja.

Ujjain: (Sanskrit) A city on the Sipra River, one of the seven sacred Hindu cities; a traditional holy place of Saivism. See: Rudrashambhu.

ultimate: Final, last. --**Ultimate Reality:** Final, highest Truth. God Siva's Absolute Reality, Parasiva.

Uma: (Sanskrit) "O do not." A name for Shakti said to derive from the exclamation addressed to Parvati by her mother in the Siva Purana, beseeching her to not practice austerities.

unconnectedness: The quality of being separate, unrelated to or uninvolved.

uncreated: Not created, without origin. An attribute of God.

undecaying: Not decaying or deteriorating.

undifferentiated: Uniform. Same. Not having distinct or different elements.

unerring: Not making an error, sure. Exacting.

unevolutionary perfection: A term describing God Siva as eternally complete and flawless and therefore not changing or developing.

unfold: To open gradually, especially in stages. See: spiritual unfoldment.

unharness: To take a harness off, to loosen restraints and make free.

unhindered: Free of obstacles. Not restrained.

universal dharma: Cosmic order, rita. See: dharma.

universal dissolution: The final stage in the recurring cosmic cycles of creation in which all manifestation is reabsorbed into God. See: mahapralaya.

universalist: Applicable to all; including everyone or all groups. Any doctrine that emphasizes principles, beliefs or theologies that are or could be acceptable to many or all people, especially as contrasted with sectarian, denominational perspectives. Such schools are often syncretic in nature, but firmly based around a core of the original faith of the founder, and usually viewed by adherents as enlightened substitutes to traditional, established faiths. See: neo-Indian religion, syncretism.

unleash: To release, as by removing a tether or rope.

unmanifest: Not evident or perceivable. Philosophically, akin to transcendent. God Siva is unmanifest in His formless perfection, Parasiva. See: formless.

unoriginated: Never begun or created. God Siva is unoriginated as He has no beginning. See: atattva, Parasiva, Primal Soul.

unpretentiousness: Modesty, humility. Not having false pride about oneself.

unrepressed: Open and honest, not marked by thoughts or feelings that are hidden or held back. Not repressed, pushed back or controlled to excess. Free of subconscious impulses, compulsions and inhibitions.

unshrouded: Uncovered. Made visible or knowable.

unwind: To undo something wound, as to unwind the thread from a spool.

upa: (Sanskrit) A common prefix conveying the meanings: "towards, near to (as opposed to apa, away), by the side of, with, below."

upadesha: (Sanskrit) "Advice; religious instruction." Often given in question-and-answer form from guru to disciple. The satguru's spiritual discourses.

upadeshi: (Sanskrit) A liberated soul who chooses to teach, actively helping others to the goal of liberation. Contrasted with nirvani. See: nirvani and upadeshi, satguru.

Upagama: (Sanskrit) Secondary Agama. A large body of texts and similar in character to the principle Agamas. Each of the 28 Siddhanta Saiva Agamas has as many as 16 Upagamas associated with it, giving more specific or elaborate information on the basic text; their total number is given as 207 or 208.

upagrantha: (Sanskrit) "Secondary text." Appendices or additional resources of a book. See: Grantha.

upanayana: (Sanskrit) "Bringing near." A youth's formal initiation into Vedic study under a guru, traditionally as a resident of his ashrama, and the investiture of the sacred thread (yajnopavita or upavita), signifying entrance into one of the three

upper castes. The upanayana is among twelve samskaras prescribed in the Dharma Shastras and explained in the Grihya Sutras. It is prescribed between ages 8-16 for brahmins (who received a white thread), 11-22 for kshatriyas (red thread), and 12-24 for vaishyas (yellow thread). At present the color white for the sacred thread has been adopted universally. The upanayana is regarded as a second or spiritual birth, and one so initiated is known as dvija, "twice-born." Until about the beginning of the common era, the upanayana was also afforded to girls. Great value was placed on their learning the Vedas in preparation for the duties of married life. See: samskaras of childhood.

Upanishad: (Sanskrit) "Sitting near devotedly." The fourth and final portion of the Vedas, expounding the secret, philosophical meaning of the Vedic hymns. The Upanishads are a collection of profound texts which are the source of Vedanta and have dominated Indian thought for thousands of years. They are philosophical chronicles of rishis expounding the nature of God, soul and cosmos, exquisite renderings of the deepest Hindu thought. Traditionally, the number of Upanishads is given as 108. Ten to 16 are classified as "major" or "principle" Upanishads, being those which philosophers have commented on through the centuries. The Upanishads are generally dated later than the Samhitas and Brahmanas, though some are actually portions of the Brahmanas. It is thought that most were written down in Sanskrit between 1500 and 600 bce. In content, these popular and approachable texts revolve around the identity of the soul and God, and the doctrines of reincarnation, of karma and of liberation through renunciation and meditation. They are widely available in many languages. Along with the Bhagavad Gita ("song of God") they were the primary scripture to awaken the Western world to the wealth of Hindu wisdom. See: shruti, Vedas, Vedanta.

upasana: (Sanskrit) "Sitting near." Worship or contemplation of God. One of the pancha nitya karmas. "five constant duties." See: sandhya upasana.

upasarga: (Sanskrit) "Trouble, obstacle." Difficulties, challenges or distractions which retard one's progress on the spiritual path. Numerous lists are given in scripture under the Sanskrit terms upasarga, dosha (defect; blemish), klesha, vighna and antaraya. The Yogatattva Upanishad lists twenty doshas including hunger, thirst, excitement, grief, anger and greed; as well as five vighnas: sloth, boastfulness, bad company, cultivation of mantras for wrong reasons and longing for women. Patanjali names nine antarayas to success in yoga, including sickness, doubt, sloth, nonattainment and instability. Spiritually, all these obstacles unless overcome lead to a dead end of unhappiness and despair, often affording steps which can only be retraced through reincarnating again. See: purity-impurity.

Upaveda: (Sanskrit) "Secondary Vedas." A class of texts on sacred sciences, composed by rishis over the course of time to amplify and apply the Vedic knowledge. The four prominent Upavedas (each encompassing numerous texts) are: Arthaveda (statecraft), Ayurveda (health), Dhanurveda (military science) and

Gandharvaveda (music and the arts). Also sometimes classed as Upavedas are the Sthapatyaveda (on architecture) and the Kama Shastras (texts on erotic love). See: Arthaveda, Ayurveda, Dhanurveda, Kama Sutra, Gandharvaveda, purushartha, Stapatyaveda.

upaya: (Sanskrit) "Means." A term used in Kashmir Saivism to describe the means to move from individual into universal consciousness. --**anavopaya:** "Individual, or limited means." Also called kriyopaya, the way of ritual worship, hatha yoga, concentration and yogic breathing. --**shaktopaya:** "Way of power." Active inquiry through mental effort, emphasizing control of awareness, japa and meditation. --**shambhavopaya:** "Way of Shambhu (Siva)." Also called icchopaya, "Way of will." Seeing Siva everywhere; surrender in God. --**anupaya:** "No-means." Not really a means, but the goal of the first three upayas--the transcendent condition of Siva Consciousness. The spontaneous realization of the Self without effort. Also called pratyabhijna upaya, "way of recognition." See: Kashmir Saivism.

upbringing: Childhood education and training.

utmost: To the highest degree, the very greatest.

Utpaladeva: (Sanskrit) Disciple (ca 900-950) of Somananda and author of Pratyabhijna Sutras (also called Pratyabhijna Darshana) and other works. See: Kashmir Saivism.

utsava: (Sanskrit) "Festival." Religious celebrations or holy days and their observance in the home and temple. Utsava is one of the five constant duties, pancha nitya karmas. See: festival.

utsavaka: (Sanskrit) "Festival maker." A person who coordinates arrangements for religious festivals.

V

Vachana: (Sanskrit) "Utterance." Short, insightful devotional poems written by the early Vira Saiva sharana saints. Full of wit and brilliant philosophy, they are the basis for Lingayat philosophy and practice.

vagdana: (Sanskrit) "Word-giving." Marriage engagement ceremony. See: samskaras of adulthood.

vahana: (Sanskrit) "Bearing, carrying or conveying." Each Hindu God is depicted as riding an animal or bird vahana, which is symbolic of a function of the God. For example, Siva rides the bull, a symbol of strength and potency. Karttikeya rides the peacock, mayura, emblem of beauty and regality.

vaidya: (Sanskrit) "Versed in science; learned; a doctor." See: ayurveda vaidya.

Vaikasi Vishakham: (Tamil) A festival held on Vishakha nakshatra, near the full moon day of the Tamil month of Vaikasi, May-June, to celebrate the creation, or "birth," of Lord Karttikeya. It is a time of gift-giving to panditas and great souls, weddings, feedings for the poor, caring for trees, spiritual initiation and conclaves of holy men.

Vaikuntha: (Sanskrit) "Vishnu's heaven." See: Vaishnavism.

vairagi: (Sanskrit) "Dispassionate one." An ascetic who lives by the principle of vairagya. Also names a particular class of mendicants, generally Vaishnavas, of North India who have freed themselves from worldly desires. See: monk, sannyasa, tyaga.

vairagya: (Sanskrit) "Dispassion; aversion." Freedom from passion. Distaste or disgust for worldliness because of spiritual awakening. Also, the constant renunciation of obstacles on the path to liberation. Ascetic or monastic life.

Vaisheshika: (Sanskrit) "Distinctionism." A philosophical school (ca 600 bce) that focuses on understanding the categories of existence. See: shad darshana.

Vaishnava: (Sanskrit) Of or relating to Vishnu; same as Vaishnavite. A follower of Lord Vishnu or His incarnations. See: Vishnu, Vaishnavism.

Vaishnavism (Vaishnava): (Sanskrit) "Way of Vishnu." One of the four major religions, or denominations of Hinduism, representing roughly half of the world's one billion Hindus. It gravitates around the worship of Lord Vishnu as Personal God, His incarnations and their consorts. The doctrine of avatara (He who descends), especially important to Vaishnavism, teaches that whenever adharma gains ascendancy in the world, God takes a human birth to reestablish "the way." There are

either 10, 22 or 34 avatars of Vishnu, according to various scriptures. The most renowned avatars were Rama and Krishna. The last to come will be Kalki, the harbinger of a golden age on Earth. Vaishnavism stresses the personal aspect of God over the impersonal, and bhakti (devotion) as the true path to salvation. The goal of Vaishnavism is the attainment of mukti, defined as blissful union with God's body, the loving recognition that the soul is a part of Him, and eternal nearness to Him in Vaikuntha, heaven. Foremost among Vaishnava scriptures are the Vaishnava Agamas, Bhagavad Gita and Bhagavata Purana. Among the earliest schools were the Pancharatras and the Bhagavatas. The five major contemporary schools (founded between 1000 and 1500) are those of Ramanuja (Sri Vaishnavism), Madhva, Nimbarka, Vallabha and Chaitanya. Philosophically they range from Madhva's pure dualism to Vallabha's lofty monistic vision.

Vaishnavite: Of or relating to Vishnu; same as Vaishnava. A follower of Vishnu or His incarnations. See: Vaishnavism, Vishnu.

vaishya: (Sanskrit) "Landowner; merchant." The social class of bankers, businessmen, industrialists; employers. Merchant class, originally those whose business was trade as well as agriculture. See: varna dharma.

valipadu: (Tamil) "Ritual worship; revering, following." The acts of adoration of the divine, expressed in many practices and ways.

Vallabhacharya: (Sanskrit) "Beloved." Vaishnava saint (ca 1475-1530) whose panentheistic Shuddha Advaita (pure nondualism) philosophy became the essential teaching of the nonascetic Vaishnava sect that bears his name. He composed 17 works, most importantly commentaries on the Vedanta and Mimamsa Sutras and the Bhagavata Purana. The stories of his 84 disciples are often repeated on festive occasions by followers. The sect is strongest in Gujarat. See: Vedanta.

vama: (Sanskrit) 1) "Pleasant; beautiful; benignant; striving after"--as in Vamadeva, a name of Siva. 2) "Left; crooked; acting in the opposite way"--as in vama marga, the left-handed tantric path." See: left-handed, tantrism.

vanaprastha ashrama: (Sanskrit) "Forest-dweller stage." See: ashrama dharma, shashtyabda purti.

vanquish: To defeat or conquer in conflict or competition. See: victors and vanquished.

Varanasi: (Sanskrit) Also known as Kashi or Banaras. (Derived from the name of two rivers, the Varana, "warding off," and Asi, "sword.") One of the most holy of Saivite cities, and among the oldest cities in the world. Located in North India on the Ganges River. Hindus consider it highly sanctifying to die in Kashi, revering it as a gateway to moksha.

varna: (Sanskrit) "External appearance, covering; type, species, kind, color; caste. See: varna dharma.

varna dharma: (Sanskrit) "The way of one's kind." The hereditary social class system, generally referred to as caste, established in India in ancient times. Within varna dharma are the many religious and moral codes which define human virtue. Varna dharma is social duty, in keeping with the principles of good conduct, according to one's community, which is generally based on the craft or occupation of the family. Strictly speaking it encompasses two interrelated social hierarchies: 1) varna, which refers to the four classes: brahmin, kshatriya, vaishya and shudra; and 2) jati, the myriad occupational subgroups, or guilds, which in India number over 3,000. Hence this dharma is sometimes called jati dharma. The class-caste system is still very much a part of Indian life today. Many modern Hindus propose that social status is now (and was originally) more properly determined by a person's skills and accomplishments than by birth. Mobility between jatis, or castes, within Hindu communities worldwide is limited but not impossible, and is accomplished through marrying into a new jati, or changing professions through persistence, skill and education. Shastris say that once a person breaks out of his varna or jati of birth and changes "caste," it takes three generations for his family to become fully established in that new strata of society, provided the continuity is unbroken.

- **--varna:** The four varnas are as follows. **--brahmin (brahmana):** "Mature, evolved soul." Scholarly, pious souls of exceptional learning. Hindu scriptures traditionally invest the brahmin class with the responsibility of religious leadership, including teaching and priestly duties. **--kshatriya:** "Governing; endowed with sovereignty." Lawmakers and law enforcers and military, also known as rajanya. **--vaishya:** "Landowner, merchant." Businessmen, financiers, industrialists; employers. Those engaged in business, commerce and agriculture. **--shudra:** (Sanskrit) "Worker, servant." Skilled artisans and laborers. It is in keeping with varna dharma that sons are expected to follow the occupation of their father, as that is the occupation that was chosen prior to birth.
- **--jati:** "Birth; position assigned by birth; rank, caste, family, race, lineage." Jati, more than varna, is the specific determinant of one's social community. Traditionally, because of rules of purity each jati is excluded from social interaction with the others, especially from interdining and intermarriage. In modern times there is also a large group (one-seventh of India's population in 1981) outside the four varnas. These are called scheduled classes, untouchables, jatihita ("outcaste"), chandalas (specifically those who handle

corpses) and harijan, a name given by Mahatma Gandhi, meaning "children of God." "Untouchable" jatis included the nishada (hunter), kaivarta (fisherman) and karavara (leather worker).

- The varna dharma system--despite its widespread discrimination against harijans, and the abuse of social status by higher castes--ensures a high standard of craftsmanship, a sense of community belonging, family integrity and religio-cultural continuity. Caste is not unique to Hinduism and India. By other names it is found in every society. The four varnas, or classes, and myriad jatis, occupational castes, or guilds, form the basic elements of human interaction. See: dharma, Dharma Shastras, jati.

varnashrama dharma: (Sanskrit) "The way of one's caste and stage of life." Names the social structure of four classes (varna), hundreds of castes (jati) and four stages of life (ashramas). It is the combined principles of varna dharma and ashrama dharma. See: ashrama dharma, dharma, varna dharma.

vasana: (Sanskrit) "Subconscious inclination." From vas, "living, remaining." The subliminal inclinations and habit patterns which, as driving forces, color and motivate one's attitudes and future actions. Vasanas are the conglomerate results of subconscious impressions (samskaras) created through experience. Samskaras, experiential impressions, combine in the subconscious to form vasanas, which thereafter contribute to mental fluctuations, called vritti. The most complex and emotionally charged vasanas are found in the dimension of mind called the sub-subconscious, or vasana chitta. See: samskara, mind (five states), vasana daha tantra, vritti.

vasana daha tantra: (Sanskrit) "Subconscious purification by fire." Daha means to burn, a tantra is a method, and vasanas are deep-seated subconscious traits or tendencies that shape one's attitudes and motivations. Vasanas can be either positive or negative. One of the best methods for resolving difficulties in life, of dissolving troublesome vasanas, the vasana daha tantra is the practice of burning confessions, or even long letters to loved ones or acquaintances, describing pains, expressing confusions and registering complaints and long-held hurts. Writing down problems and burning them in any ordinary fire brings them from the subconscious into the external mind, releasing the suppressed emotion as the fire consumes the paper. This is a magical healing process. See: lekhapartha havana, vasana.

Vasishtha: (Sanskrit) Disciple of Maharishi Nandikeshvara (Nandinatha) (ca 250 bce) along with Patanjali and Vyaghrapada (as recorded in Panini's book of grammar). Also the name of several other famous sages, including the rishi attributed with composing the hymns of the Rig Veda's seventh mandala, another

who plays a central role in the epics and certain Puranas and Upanishads, and a third who expounds the ancient yogic wisdom to Lord Rama in the 29,000-verse Yoga Vasishtha.

Vasugupta: (Sanskrit) Celebrated preceptor (ca 800) whose finding of the Siva Sutras catalyzed the reemergence of the ancient Kashmir Saiva tradition. It is said that he discovered the 77 sutras carved in a rock on Mahadeva mountain after a visionary dream in which Lord Siva told him of their location. The sacred rock, named Shankarpal, is revered to this day. See: Kashmir Saivism, Siva Sutras.

vata: (Sanskrit) The banyan tree, *Ficus indicus* sacred to Siva. Thought to derive from vat, "to surround, encompass"--also called nyagrodha, "growing downwards." Ancient symbol of the Sanatana Dharma. Its relative, the ashvattha, or pipal tree, is given in the Upanishads as a metaphor for creation, with the "roots above and the branches below."

vata: (Sanskrit) "Movement." Vayu, "air-ether." One of the three bodily humors, called dosha, vata is known as the air humor. Principle of movement in the body. Vata dosha governs such functions as breathing and movement of the muscles and tissues. See: ayurveda, dosha.

vault: An arched roof, ceiling or chamber.

Veda: (Sanskrit) "Wisdom." Sagely revelations which comprise Hinduism's most authoritative scripture. They, along with the Agamas, are shruti, "that which is heard." The Vedas are a body of dozens of holy texts known collectively as the Veda, or as the four Vedas: Rig, Yajur, Sama and Atharva. In all they include over 100,000 verses, as well as additional prose. The knowledge imparted by the Vedas is highly mystical or superconscious rather than intellectual. Each Veda has four sections: Samhitas (hymn collections), Brahmanas (priestly manuals), Aranyakas (forest treatises) and Upanishads (enlightened discourses). The Samhitas and Brahmanas (together known as the karmakanda, "ritual section") detail a transcendent-immanent Supreme-Being cosmology and a system of worship through fire ceremony and chanting to establish communication with the Gods. The Aranyakas and Upanishads (the jnanakanda, "knowledge section") outline the soul's evolutionary journey, providing yogic-philosophic training and propounding a lofty, nondual realization as the destiny of all souls. The oldest portions of the Vedas are thought to date back as far as 6,000 bce, written down in Sanskrit in the last few millennia, making them the world's most ancient scriptures. See: Aranyaka, Brahmana, shruti, Upanishad, Vedanga.

Vedanga: (Sanskrit) "Veda-limb." Six branches of post-Vedic studies revered as auxiliary to the Vedas. Four Vedangas govern correct chanting of the Vedas: 1) Shiksha (phonetics), 2) Chandas (meter), 3) Nirukta (etymology), 4) Vyakarana (grammar). The two other Vedangas are 5) Jyotisha Vedanga (astronomy-astrology)

and 6) Kalpa Vedanga (procedural canon) which includes the Shrauta and Shulba Shastras (ritual codes), Dharma Shastras (social law) and Grihya Shastras (domestic codes). See: Kalpa Vedanga, Vedas, and individual entries for named texts.

Vedanta: (Sanskrit) "Ultimate wisdom" or "final conclusions of the Vedas." Vedanta is the system of thought embodied in the Upanishads (ca 1500-600 bce), which give forth the ultimate conclusions of the Vedas. Through history there developed numerous Vedanta schools, ranging from pure dualism to absolute monism. The first and original school is Advaita Ishvaravada, "monistic theism" or panentheism, exemplified in the Vedanta-Siddhanta of Rishi Tirumular (ca 250 bce) of the Nandinatha Sampradaya in his Tirumantiram, which is a perfect summation of both the Vedas and the Agamas. This is a dipolar reconciliation of monism and dualism which, as philosopher-statesman Dr. S. Radhakrishnan (1888-1975) declared, best depicts the philosophy of the Upanishads. After about 700 ce, many other schools developed, each establishing itself through written commentaries on the major Upanishads, the Bhagavad Gita and the Brahma Sutras. The latter text, by Badarayana (ca 400 bce), is the earliest known systematization of Vedanta, but its extremely terse aphorisms are philosophically illusive without commentary. During the "scholastic era" (700-1700), three main variations of the original Vedanta were developed: 1) Advaita Vedanta, or pure nondualism, exemplified by Shankara (788-820); 2) Vishishtadvaita Vedanta, or qualified nondualism, most fully expressed by Ramanuja (1017-1137); and 3) Dvaita Vedanta, expounded by Madhva (1197-1278).

- Panentheism is embodied in those qualified nondual Vedanta schools that accept the ultimate identity of the soul and God. Examples are the Vishishtadvaita of Bhaskara (ca 950), the Shuddha Advaita, "pure nondualism," of Vallabha (ca 1475-1530) and, to a lesser degree, the Vishishtadvaita of Ramanuja.
- In summary: Madhva, the dualist, conceives Brahman to be the Personal God. In his philosophy, the universe, souls and God are all separate from one another and real. Ramanuja, the qualified nondualist, also conceives Brahman to be the Personal God. In his philosophy, God must not be considered apart from the world and souls, for the three together form a one whole. The world and souls are real as the body of God, and the individual soul feels himself to be part of God. Shankara, the strict advaitist, conceives Brahman to be the Impersonal God, the Absolute. Shankara does not deny the existence of the Personal God, known as Ishvara, but declares Ishvara to be equally as unreal as the universe and the individuality of the soul. In truth, the only Reality is the Absolute, and man is that Absolute. To Rishi

Tirumular, the panentheist, there is an eternal oneness of God and man at the level of their inner Being, but a difference is acknowledged during the evolution of the soul. Ultimately even this difference merges in identity. Thus, there is perfectly beginningless oneness and a temporary difference which resolves itself in perfect identity.

- Vedanta is one of the six classical philosophies (shad darshanas) along with Nyaya, Vaisheshika, Sankhya, Yoga and Mimamsa. Vedanta is also called Uttara Mimamsa, "upper or later examination," as distinguished from Purva Mimamsa, which concerned itself solely with the earlier portions of the Veda. Other important schools of Vedanta include the Dvaitadvaita, "dual-nondualism," of Nimbarka (ca 1150), and the Achintya Bhedabheda, "unthinkable difference-nondifference," of Chaitanya (1485-1534). See: acosmic pantheism, Advaita Isvaravada, dvaita-advaita, monistic theism, Madhva, panentheism, Ramanuja, Tirumantiram, Vallabha.

Vedic-Agamic: Simultaneously drawing from and complying with both of Hinduism's revealed scriptures (shruti), Vedas and Agamas, which represent two complimentary, intertwining streams of history and tradition. The difference between Siddhanta and Vedanta is traditionally described in the following way. While the Vedas depict man looking for God, the Agamas hold the perspective of God looking to help man. This is reflected in the fact that while the Vedas are voiced by rishis, God or the Goddess is the giver of truth in the Agama texts. See: grace, shruti.

vegetarian: Shakahara. Of a diet which excludes meat, fish, fowl and eggs. Vegetarianism is a principle of health and environmental ethics that has been a keystone of Indian life for thousands of years. Vegetarian foods include grains, fruits, vegetables, legumes and dairy products. Natural, fresh foods, locally grown, without insecticides or chemical fertilizers, are preferred. The following foods are minimized: frozen and canned foods, highly processed foods, such as white rice, white sugar and white flour; and "junk" foods and beverages (those with abundant chemical additives, such as artificial sweeteners, colorings, flavorings and preservatives). A person following a vegetarian diet is called a shakahari. See: guna, mansahari, yama-niyama.

veil: A piece of cloth used to conceal. To cover or hide.

veiling grace: Tirobhava shakti. The divine power that limits the soul's perception by binding or attaching the soul to the bonds of anava, karma, and maya-- enabling it to grow and evolve as an individual being. See: grace.

vel: (Tamil) "Spear, lance." The symbol of Lord Karttikeya's divine authority as Lord of yoga and commander of the devas. (Known as shula in Sanskrit.) See: Karttikeya.

Vellore: (Tamil) See: Chinna Bomman.

venerate: To love or consider with respect and admiration; to revere. From the Latin veneratus, to worship, reverence.

vengeful: Desiring or seeking to return injury for injury. Wanting revenge.

venture: To risk. To express in words at the risk of criticism.

veracity: Honesty, truthfulness; accuracy.

vermillion: Bright red.

veshti: (Tamil) A long, unstitched cloth like a sarong, wound about the waist and reaching below the ankles. Traditional Hindu apparel for men. It can be wrapped in many different styles. A Tamil word derived from the Sanskrit veshtana, "encircling." Also called vetti (Tamil) or dhoti (Hindi).

vestments: The clothing, especially official robes or other garb, worn by religious persons, often as a sign of their spiritual position or ordination.

vibhuti: (Sanskrit) "Resplendent, powerful." Holy ash, prepared by burning cow dung along with other precious substances, milk, ghee, honey, etc. It symbolizes purity and is one of the main sacraments given at puja in all Saivite temples and shrines. Saivites wear three stripes on the brow as a distinct sectarian mark, as do many Smartas. Vibhuti is also a synonym for siddhi, supernormal powers developed through yoga practice. It is the title of the third chapter of Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, which discusses siddhis. See: tilaka. tripundra.

vice: Fault or failing. Corrupt habits; depravity. From the Sanskrit vishu, meaning, "adverse; in opposite directions."

victors and vanquished: Those who triumph and those who are defeated in battle, debate or any competition. A concept or attitude about winning and losing derived from dualistic beliefs, which can lead to adharma, himsa, etc.

vid: (Sanskrit) "To know." Verbal root of Veda and vidya, "knowledge."

videhamukti: (Sanskrit) "Disembodied liberation." Release from reincarnation through nirvikalpa samadhi--the realization of the Self, Parasiva--at the point of death. Blessed are those who are aware that departure, mahasamadhi, is drawing near. They settle all affairs, make amends and intensify personal sadhana. They seek

the silver channel of sushumna which guides kundalini through the door of Brahman into the beyond of the beyond. They seek total renunciation as the day of transition looms strongly in their consciousness. Those who know that Lord Yama is ready to receive them, seek to merge with Siva. They seek nirvikalpa samadhi as the body and earthly life fall away. Those who succeed are the videhamuktas, honored as among those who will never be reborn. Hindu tradition allows for vows of renunciation, called atura sannyasa diksha, to be taken and the orange robe donned by the worthy sadhaka or householder in the days prior to death. See: jivanmukti, kaivalya, moksha, Parasiva, Self Realization.

vidya: (Sanskrit) "Knowledge, learning, science." The power of understanding gained through study and meditation. Contrasted with avidya, ignorance.

vidyarambha: (Sanskrit) "Commencement of learning." See: samskaras of childhood.

Vighneshvara: (Sanskrit) "Lord of Obstacles." A name for Lord Ganesha describing His power to both remove and create obstacles to guide souls along the right path. See: Ganesha.

Vijayanagara: (Sanskrit) "City of Victory." Opulent city and last Indian empire, centered in present-day Karnataka state, which extended as far as Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines. It flourished from 1336 to 1565, at which time it began to disintegrate following defeat at the hand of Muslim armies. However, its existence and strength did serve to prevent Muslim expansion into South India. Awed visitors recounted its fabulously rich culture and great wealth. Site of extensive recent archeological renovation.

vijnanamaya kosha: (Sanskrit) "Sheath of cognition." The soul's mental or cognitive-intuitive sheath, also called the actinodic sheath. See: kosha, mental body, soul.

Vinayaka: (Sanskrit) "Remover." A name of Lord Ganesha, meaning the remover of obstacles (sometimes preceded by vighna, "obstacle"). See: Ganesha.

Vinayaka Ahaval: (Tamil) "Ode to Vinayaka." Famous Tamil poem in praise of Ganesha by the 8th-century woman saint, Auvaiyar.

Vinayaka Vratam: (Tamil) A 21-day festival to Lord Ganesha beginning on the full-moon day of November-December. An important festival in Tamil Nadu and in Tamil communities worldwide, when special pujas are conducted in Ganesha temples, and devotees make a vow (vrata), such as to attend the daily puja, or to fast by taking only one meal a day. (Sanskrit)

Vira Saivism (Saiva): (Sanskrit) "Heroic Saivism." Made prominent by Basavanna in the 12th century. Also called Lingayat Saivism. Followers, called Lingayats, Lingavantas or Sivasharanas, always wear a Sivalinga on their person. Vira Saivites are proudly egalitarian and emphasize the personal relationship with Siva, rather than temple worship. Vira Saiva priests, jangamas, conduct marriages and other domestic rites and also act as gurus or teachers. Among the most central texts are Basavanna's Vachanas, Allama Prabhu's Mantragopya, Chennabasavanna's Karana Hasuge, and the collected work called Shunya Sampadane. The monistic-theistic doctrine of Vira Saivism is called Shakti Vishishtadvaita--a version of qualified nondualism which accepts both difference and nondifference between soul and God, like rays are to the sun. In brief, Siva and the cosmic force or existence are one ("Siva are you; you shall return to Siva."). Yet, Siva is beyond His creation, which is real, not illusory. God is both efficient and material cause. In Vira Saivism, Siva divides from His Absolute state into Linga (Supreme Lord) and anga, individual soul, the two eventually reuniting in undifferentiated oneness. There are three aspects of Sivalinga. 1) Ishtalinga, personal form of Siva, in which He fulfills desires and removes afflictions--God as bliss or joy; 2) Bhavalinga, Siva beyond space and time, the highest divine principle, knowable through intuition; 3) Pranalinga, the reality of God which can be apprehended by the mind. The soul merges with Siva by a progressive, six-stage path called shatsthala, consisting of bhakti (devotion), mahesha (charity and selfless service), prasada (seeking Siva's grace), Pranalinga (experience of all as Siva), sharana (egoless refuge in Siva) and aikya (oneness with Siva). Today Vira Saivism is a vibrant faith, particularly strong in its religious homeland of Karnataka, South Central India. Roughly 40 million people live here, of which perhaps 25% are members of the Vira Saiva religion. Early on, they rejected brahminical authority, and along with it the entire caste system and the Vedas. By rejecting the Vedas, they continue to stand outside mainstream Hinduism, but in their profound love of Siva and acceptance of certain Saiva Agamas, as well as the main truths of the Vedic wisdom, they have identified themselves as a unique Saiva sect. Though they have established their faith as a distinct and independent religion in Indian courts of law, they are still widely embraced as devout brothers and sisters of the Hindu dharma. See: Lingavanta, Saivism.

virginal: Characteristic of a virgin. Pure. --**virginal God:** Reference to Lord Karttikeya, the perpetual bachelor, descriptive of His inherent purity.

visarjana: (Sanskrit) "Departure." See: Ganesha Chaturthi.

Vishnu: (Sanskrit) "The All-Pervasive." Supreme Deity of the Vaishnavite religion. God as personal Lord and Creator, the All-Loving Divine Personality, who periodically incarnates and lives a fully human life to reestablish dharma whenever necessary. In Saivism, Vishnu is Siva's aspect as Preserver. See: Vaishnavism.

visionary: Characteristic of one who has visions; a prophet, evolved seer.

Vishishtadvaita: (Sanskrit) "Qualified nondualism." Best known as the term used by Ramanuja (ca 1017-1137) to name his Vaishnava Vedanta philosophy, which is nondualistic in that the ultimate truth or reality is one, not two, and souls are in fact part of God. And it is "qualified" in that souls are fully one with God, but not identical. Thus there is a full union which is somewhat shy of total merger. Siva Vishishtadvaita was the term chosen by Bhaskara (ca 950) to name his philosophy. See: Siva Advaita, Vedanta.

visualize (visualization): To imagine, create mental images. Exercising the power of thought to create the future.

vishuddha chakra: (Sanskrit) "Wheel of purity." The fifth chakra. Center of divine love. See: chakra.

vishvagrasi: (Sanskrit) "Total absorption." The final merger of the soul in Siva at the fulfillment of its evolution. It is ultimate union of the individual soul body with the body of Siva--Parameshvara--within the Sivaloka, from whence the soul was first emanated. This occurs at the end of the soul's evolution, after the four outer sheaths--annamaya kosha, pranamaya kosha, manomaya kosha and vijnamaya kosha--have been dropped off. Finally, anandamaya kosha, the soul form itself, merges in the Primal Soul. Individuality is lost as the soul becomes Siva, the creator, preserver, destroyer, veiler and revealer. Individual identity expands into universality. Having previously merged in Parasiva and Parashakti in states of samadhi, the soul now fully merges into Parameshvara and is one with all three of Siva's perfections. Jiva has totally become Siva--not a new and independent Siva, as might be construed, for there is and can only be one Supreme God Siva. This fulfilled merger can happen at the moment the physical body is dropped off, or after eons of time following further unfoldment of the higher chakras in the inner worlds--all depending on the maturity, ripeness and intentions of the soul, by which is meant the advanced soul's choice to be either an upadeshi or a nirvani. See: atman, evolution of the soul, nirvani and upadeshi, samadhi, soul.

vitala: (Sanskrit) "Region of negation." Region of raging anger and viciousness. The second chakra below the muladhara, centered in the thighs. Corresponds to the second astral netherworld beneath the earth's surface, called Avichi ("joyless") or Vitala. See: chakra, loka, Naraka.

vivaha: (Sanskrit) "Marriage." See: samskaras.

Viveka Chudamani: (Sanskrit) "Crest jewel of discrimination." A famous text by Shankara (788-820) on discipline and discrimination between the real and the unreal as the way to God.

Viveka Martanda: (Sanskrit) A philosophic treatise of the Siddha Siddhanta school of Saivism ascribed to Gorakshanatha (ca 900).

Vivekananda, Swami: (Sanskrit) "Of blissful discrimination." Disciple of Sri Ramakrishna who was overtaken by an ardent love of Hinduism and a missionary zeal that drove him onward. He attained mahasamadhi at age 39 (1863-1902). Most notable among his achievements was a trip around the world on which he gave brilliant lectures, especially in Europe and America, that created much respect for Hinduism. In India he founded the Ramakrishna Mission which thrives today internationally with over 100 centers and nearly 1,000 sannyasins. He is credited, along with Tagore, Aurobindo, Radhakrishnan and others, with sparking the modern Hindu revival. See: jnana yoga, Ramakrishna.

vivify: To give life to, or make more active, influential, etc.

void: An empty space. Philosophically, emptiness itself. The absence of time, form and space. God Siva in His perfection as Parasiva, as a sacred void, but not "like the emptiness inside of an empty box....[It] is the fullness of everything." See: Parasiva.

votary: A person committed by a vow. A devotee; a monk or nunk.

vrata: (Sanskrit) "Vow, religious oath." Often a vow to perform certain disciplines over a period of time, such as penance, fasting, specific mantra repetitions, worship or meditation. Vratas extend from the simplest personal promise to irrevocable vows made before God, Gods, guru and community. See: marriage covenant, sannyasa diksha, Vinayaka Vratam.

vritti: (Sanskrit) "Whirlpool." In yoga psychology, names the fluctuations of consciousness, the waves of mental activities (chitta vritti) of thought and perception. A statement from Patanjali's Yoga Sutras (1.2) reads, "Yoga is the restraint (nirodha) of mental activity (chitta vritti)." In general use, vritti means: 1) course of action, mode of life; conduct, behavior; way in which something is done; 2) mode of being, nature, kind, character. See: mind (individual), raja yoga.

Vyaghrapada: (Sanskrit) "Tiger feet." Famous Nandinatha Sampradaya siddha (ca 200 bce), trained under Maharishi Nandinatha, was a brother disciple of rishis Tirumular and Patanjali. He pilgrimaged south from Kashmir, settling at Tamil Nadu's Chidambaram Siva Temple to practice yoga. See: Kailasa Parampara.

Vyakarana Vedanga: (Sanskrit) Auxiliary Vedic texts on Sanskrit grammar. Vyakarana is among four linguistic skills taught for mastery of the Vedas and the rites of yajna. The term literally means "separation, or explanation." The most celebrated Vyakarana work is Panini's 4,000-sutra Ashtadhyayi, which set the linguistic standards for classical Sanskrit (ca 400 bce). See: Vedanga.

W

wane: To decrease. "On the wane:" in the process of decreasing or disappearing.

warp and woof: In the art of weaving, warp names the lengthwise threads that give structure to the cloth; woof denotes the crossing threads that give design and color. Taken together, the expression "warp and woof" means the very fiber or essence of a thing.

waver: To vacillate, showing doubt or indecision. Characteristic of not being firm-minded. To be unsure of oneself. See: conversion to Hinduism.

wealth: Artha. Abundance; financial stability. See: purushartha.

wedding pendant: A gold ornament worn by the Hindu wife around the neck representing her vows of matrimony. Known as mangala sutra in Sanskrit, and tali in Tamil. She reveres it as an image of her husband and ritually worships it during her morning devotions.

whence: From where. Whence does it come? Where does it come from?

whirling: To move rapidly in a circular motion.

wield: To hold and use with skill.

wisdom: The timely application of knowledge. The power of judging the best course of action, based on understanding, knowledge and experience.

withholding: To refrain from giving. Not granting.

woeful: Sad, pitiful, full of sorrow. --**woeful birth:** An unfavorable birth; a life of difficulties resulting from negative karmas accrued in previous lives.

wondrous: Inspiring awe, extraordinary, mirific.

woodwind: A wind instrument such as the flute or the Indian nagasvara.

woof: See: warp and woof.

Words of Our Master: A collection of sayings and inspiring statements of Sage Yogaswami of Sri Lanka--compiled from the notes and recollections of devotees.

world: In Hindu theology, world refers to 1) **loka:** a particular region of consciousness or plane of existence. 2) **maya:** The whole of manifest existence; the phenomenal universe, or cosmos. In this sense it transcends the limitations of

physical reality, and can include emotional, mental and spiritual, physical realms of existence, depending on its use. Also denoted by the terms prakriti and Brahmanda. 3) **pasha:** In Saivism, the term world is often used to translate the term pasha in the Agamic triad of fundamentals--Pati, pashu, pasha, "God, soul, world." It is thus defined as the "fetter" (pasha) that binds the soul, veiling its true nature and enabling it to grow and evolve through experience as an individual being. In this sense, the world, or pasha, is three-fold, comprising anava (the force of individuation), karma (the principle of cause and effect) and maya (manifestation, the principle of matter, Siva's mirific energy, the sixth tattva). See: Brahmanda, microcosm-macrocosm, sarvabhadra, Sivamaya, tattva.

worldly: Materialistic, unspiritual. Devoted to or concerned with the affairs or pleasures of the world, especially excessive concern to the exclusion of religious thought and life. Connoting ways born of the lower chakras: jealousy, greed, selfishness, anger, guile, etc. --**worldliness:** The state or quality of being worldly. --**worldly wise:** Knowledgeable in the ways of the world. Street wise. Sophisticated. See: materialism, samsari.

wrath: Intense anger. Rage.

written prayers: See: lekhaprarthana havana.

wrought: Formed, fashioned, crafted, built.

Y

yajna: (Sanskrit) "Worship; sacrifice." One of the most central Hindu concepts--sacrifice and surrender through acts of worship, inner and outer. 1) A form of ritual worship especially prevalent in Vedic times, in which oblations--ghee, grains, spices and exotic woods--are offered into a fire according to scriptural injunctions while special mantras are chanted. The element fire, Agni, is revered as the divine messenger who carries offerings and prayers to the Gods. The ancient Veda Brahmanas and the Shrauta Shastras describe various types of yajna rites, some so elaborate as to require hundreds of priests, whose powerful chanting resounds for miles. These major yajnas are performed in large, open-air structures called yagashala. Domestic yajnas, prescribed in the Grihya Shastras, are performed in the family compound or courtyard. Yajna requires four components, none of which may be omitted: dravya, sacrificial substances; tyaga, the spirit of sacrificing all to God; devata, the celestial beings who receive the sacrifice; and mantra, the empowering word or chant.

- While puja (worship in temples with water, lights and flowers) has largely replaced the yajna, this ancient rite still continues, and its specialized priestly training is carried on in schools in India. Yajnas of a grand scale are performed for special occasions, beseeching the Gods for rain during drought, or for peace during bloody civil war. Even in temples, yajna has its Agamic equivalent in the agnikaraka, the homa or havana ceremony, held in a fire pit (homakunda) in an outer mandapa of a temple as part of elaborate puja rites.
- 2) Personal acts of worship or sacrifice. Life itself is a **jivayajna**. The Upanishads suggest that one can make "inner yajnas" by offering up bits of the little self into the fires of sadhana and tapas until the greater Self shines forth. The five daily yajnas, **pancha mahayajna**, of the householder (outlined in the Dharma Shastras) ensure offerings to rishis, ancestors, Gods, creatures and men. They are as follows. --**brahma yajna:** (also called Veda yajna or rishi yajna) "Homage to the seers." Accomplished through studying and teaching the Vedas. --**deva yajna:** "Homage to Gods and elementals." Recognizing the debt due to those who guide nature, and the feeding of them by offering ghee and uncooked grains into the fire. This is the homa sacrifice. --**pitri yajna:** "Homage to ancestors." Offering of cakes (pinda) and water to the family line and the progenitors of mankind. --**bhuta yajna:** "Homage to beings." Placing food-offerings, bali, on the ground, intended for animals,

birds, insects, wandering outcastes and beings of the invisible worlds. ("Let him gently place on the ground [food] for dogs, outcastes, svapachas, those diseased from sins, crows and insects" Manu Dharma Shastras 3.92).
--manushya yajna: "Homage to men." Feeding guests and the poor, the homeless and the student. Manushya yajna includes all acts of philanthropy, such as tithing and charity. The Vedic study is performed in the morning. The other four yajnas are performed just before taking one's noon meal. Manu Dharma Shastras (3.80) states, "Let him worship, according to the rule, the rishis with Veda study, the devas with homa, the pitris with shraddha, men with food, and the bhutas with bali." Mystics warn that all offerings must be tempered in the fires of kundalini through the power of inner yajna to be true and valuable, just as the fire of awareness is needed to indelibly imprint ideas and concepts on one's own akashic window. See: dharma, havana, homa, puja, sacrifice.

Yajnavalkya Smriti: (Sanskrit) A Hindu code of law, one of the Dharma Shastras, regarded second in authority only to the earlier Manu Dharma Shastras. See: Dharma Shastra, smriti.

Yajnavalkya Upanishad: (Sanskrit) A metrical rendering of the Jabala Upanishad, which expounds on sannyasa, renunciation of worldly life in the quest for liberation.

Yajnopavita: (Sanskrit) "Sacred thread." See: upanayana.

Yajur Veda: (Sanskrit) "Wisdom of sacrificial formulas." One of the four compendia of revelatory texts called Vedas (Rig, Sama, Yajur and Atharva). When used alone, the term Yajur Veda generally refers to this Veda's central and oldest portion--the Samhita, "hymn collection." Of this there are two recensions: 1) the Krishna ("black") Yajur Veda (so-called because the commentary, Brahmana, material is mixed with the hymns); and 2) the Shukla ("white or clear") Yajur Veda (with no commentary among the hymns). The contents of these two recensions are also presented in different order. The Yajur Veda Samhita is divided into 40 chapters and contains 1,975 stanzas. About 30 percent of the stanzas are drawn from the Rig Veda Samhita (particularly from chapters eight and nine). This Veda is a special collection of hymns to be chanted during yajna. The Krishna Yajur Veda Samhita exists today in various recensions, most importantly the Taittiriya Samhita and the Maitrayani Samhita. The Shukla Yajur Veda Samhita is preserved most prominently as the Vajasaneyi Samhita. See: Vedas.

Yama: (Sanskrit) "The restrainer." Hindu God of death; oversees the processes of death transition, guiding the soul out of its present physical body. See: death.

yama-niyama: (Sanskrit) "Restraints-observances." The first two of the eight limbs of raja yoga, constituting Hinduism's fundamental ethical codes, the yamas and niyamas are the essential foundation for all spiritual progress. They are codified in numerous scriptures including the Shandilya and Varuha Upanishads, Hatha Yoga Pradipika by Gorakshanatha, the Tirumantiram of Tirumular and the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali. All the above texts list ten yamas and ten niyamas, with the exception of Patanjali's classic work, which lists only five of each. The yamas are the ethical restraints; the niyamas are the religious practices. Because it is brief, the entire code can be easily memorized and reviewed daily by the spiritual aspirant. Here are the ten traditional yamas and ten niyamas. --**yamas:** 1) **ahimsa:** "Noninjury." Not harming others by thought, word, or deed. 2) **satya:** "Truthfulness." Refraining from lying and betraying promises. 3) **asteya:** "Nonstealing." Neither stealing, nor coveting nor entering into debt. 4) **brahmacharya:** (Sanskrit) "Divine conduct." Controlling lust by remaining celibate when single, leading to faithfulness in marriage. 5) **kshama:** (Sanskrit) "Patience." Restraining intolerance with people and impatience with circumstances. 6) **dhriti:** "Steadfastness." Overcoming nonperseverance, fear, indecision and changeableness. 7) **daya:** "Compassion." Conquering callous, cruel and insensitive feelings toward all beings. 8) **arjava:** "Honesty, straightforwardness." Renouncing deception and wrongdoing. 9) **mitahara:** "Moderate appetite." Neither eating too much nor consuming meat, fish, fowl or eggs. 10) **shaucha:** "Purity." Avoiding impurity in body, mind and speech. --**niyamas:** 1) **hri:** "Remorse." Being modest and showing shame for misdeeds. 2) **santosa:** "Contentment." Seeking joy and serenity in life. 3) **dana:** "Giving." Tithing and giving generously without thought of reward. 4) **astikya:** (Sanskrit) "Faith." Believing firmly in God, Gods, guru and the path to enlightenment. 5) **Ishvarapujana:** "Worship of the Lord." The cultivation of devotion through daily worship and meditation. 6) **siddhanta shravana:** "Scriptural listening." Studying the teachings and listening to the wise of one's lineage. 7) **mati:** "Cognition." Developing a spiritual will and intellect with the guru's guidance. 8) **vrata:** "Sacred vows." Fulfilling religious vows, rules and observances faithfully. 9) **japa:** "Recitation." Chanting mantras daily. 10) **tapas:** (Sanskrit) "Austerity." Performing sadhana, penance, tapas and sacrifice. Patanjali lists the yamas as: ahimsa, satya, asteya, brahmacharya and aparigraha (noncovetousness); and the niyamas as: shaucha, santosha, tapas, svadhyaya (self-reflection, scriptural study) and Ishvarapranidhana (worship). See: raja yoga.

yantra: (Sanskrit) "Restrainer," "limiter." A mystic diagram composed of geometric and alphabetic figures--usually etched on small plates of gold, silver or copper. Sometimes rendered in three dimensions in stone or metal. The purpose of a yantra is to focus spiritual and mental energies according to computer-like yantric pattern, be it for health, wealth, childbearing or the invoking of one God or another. It is usually installed near or under the temple Deity. Psychically seen, the temple yantra

is a magnificent three-dimensional edifice of light and sound in which the devas work. On the astral plane, it is much larger than the temple itself. --**Sri Chakra:** The most well known yantra and a central image in Shakta worship. Consisting of nine interlocking triangles, it is the design of Siva-Shakti's multidimensional manifestations. Yantras are also used for meditation and sadhana, especially in the Shakta tradition. Installing them beneath Deities is a fairly modern practice, while the Agamas prescribe the placement of precious gems. For Saivites the Tiru-ambala chakra, representing Lord Nataraja, is most sacred. See: murti.

yea: Yes, indeed, truly.

yield: To produce as a result of cultivation, such as fruit. To profit or give.

yoga: (Sanskrit) "Union." From yuj, "to yoke, harness, unite." The philosophy, process, disciplines and practices whose purpose is the yoking of individual consciousness with transcendent or divine consciousness. One of the six darshanas, or systems of orthodox Hindu philosophy. Yoga was codified by Patanjali in his Yoga Sutras (ca 200 bce) as the eight limbs (ashtanga) of raja yoga. It is essentially a one system, but historically, parts of raja yoga have been developed and emphasized as yogas in themselves. Prominent among the many forms of yoga are hatha yoga (emphasizing bodily perfection in preparation for meditation), kriya yoga (emphasizing breath control), as well as karma yoga (selfless service) and bhakti yoga (devotional practices) which could be regarded as an expression of raja yoga's first two limbs (yama and niyama). See: austerity, bhakti yoga, danda, hatha yoga, jivanmukta, raja yoga, shad darshana, siddha yoga, siddhi.

yoga pada: (Sanskrit) The third of the successive stages in spiritual unfoldment in Saiva Siddhanta, wherein the goal is Self Realization. See: pada, yoga.

Yoga Sampradaya: (Sanskrit) A term for Siddha Siddhanta. See: Saivism.

Yogaswami: (Tamil) "Master of yoga." Sri Lanka's most renowned contemporary spiritual master (1872-1964), a Sivajnani and Natha siddhar revered by both Hindus and Buddhists. He was trained in and practiced kundalini yoga under the guidance of Satguru Chellappaswami, from whom he received guru diksha. Sage Yogaswami was in turn the satguru of Sivaya Subramuniaswami, current preceptor of the Natha Sampradaya's Kailasa Parampara. Yogaswami conveyed his teachings in hundreds of songs, called Natchintanai, "good thoughts," urging seekers to follow dharma and realize God within. Four great sayings capsule his message: Thanai ari, "Know thy Self by thyself;" Sarvam Sivam Ceyal, "Siva is doing it all;" Sarvam Sivamaya, "All is Siva;" and Summa Iru, "Be still." See: Kailasa Parampara.

yoga tapas: (Sanskrit) "Fiery union." Relentless, sustained yoga practice that awakens the fiery kundalini, bringing the transforming heat of tapas and ultimately the repeated experience of the Self God, leading to jnana, the wisdom state. See:

Advaita Siddhanta, austerity, danda, jivanmukta, Kadaitswami, karma, jnana, penance, punya, siddhi, tapas, yama, yoga.

Yogatattva Upanishad: (Sanskrit) Scripture of 142 verses based on Advaita Vedanta and yoga practices, ca 1400.

Yoga Vasishtha: (Sanskrit) Poetic work of over 29,000 verses attributed to Valmiki. It is a dialog between Prince Rama and his teacher, Sage Vasishtha, in the form of 50 intriguing stories which present advaita and the concepts and ideals of yoga in elegant Sanskrit. (Variously dated between 500 and 1000 ce.)

yogi: (Sanskrit) One who practices yoga, especially kundalini or raja yoga.

yogini: (Sanskrit) Feminine counterpart of yogi.

yon: That or those (at a distance).

yoni: (Sanskrit) "Source, origin; female genitals, womb." In some tantric sects the Sivalinga is depicted as a phallic symbol, and the base as a vulva, or yoni. While the linga represents the unmanifest or static Absolute, the yoni represents the dynamic, creative energy of God, the womb of the universe.

yore: Of yore: a long time ago, in a distant past. See: Sivalinga, tantrism.

young soul: A soul who has gone through only a few births, and is thus inexperienced or immature. See: evolution of the soul, soul.

yuga: (Sanskrit) "Period, age." One of four ages which chart the duration of the world according to Hindu thought. They are: Satya (or Krita), Treta, Dvapara and Kali. In the first period, dharma reigns supreme, but as the ages revolve, virtue diminishes and ignorance and injustice increases. At the end of the Kali Yuga, which we are in now, the cycle begins again with a new Satya Yuga. It is said in the Mahabharata that during the Satya Yuga all are brahmins, and the color of this yuga is white. In the Treta Yuga, righteousness decreases by one-fourth and men seek reward for their rites and gifts; the color is red and the consciousness of the kshatriya, sovereignty, prevails. In the Dvapara Yuga, the four varnas come fully into existence. The color is yellow. In the Kali Yuga, the color is black. Righteousness is one-tenth that of the Satya Yuga. True worship and sacrifice cease, and base, or shudra, consciousness is prominent. Calamities, disease, fatigue and faults such as anger and fear prevail. People decline and their motives grow weak. See: cosmic cycle, mahapralaya, pralaya.

Z

zenith: Highest point; apex; summit.

Zoroastrian: Of or related to Zoroastrianism, a religion founded in Persia by Spenta Zarathustra (ca 600 bce). It has roughly 150,000 adherents today, mostly near Mumbai, where they are called Parsis. The faith stresses monotheism while recognizing a universal struggle between the force of good (led by Ahura Mazda) and evil (led by Ahriman). The sacred fire, always kept burning in the home, is considered the only worshipful symbol. Scripture is the Zend Avesta.