GLOSSARY FOR HINDU, BUDDHIST AND JAIN TRADITIONS IN INDIA

Veda – sacred scripture or shruti (“what has been heard”); veda = “knowledge”
Upanishad – “sitting down near” the teacher; first speculative texts
Karman – “action” – how one acts determines one’s future trajectory
Samsara – “going completely around” or transmigration or rebirth
Varnashrama-dharma – obligations regarding caste and stage of life
Four “ends” of life:
   Dharma – law, custom, social order
   Artha – government, livelihood, “material” well being
   Kama – desire or love; erotic and aesthetic aspects of life
   Moksha – “release” or spiritual liberation
Four “castes” or “varnas”
   Brahmana
   Kshatriya
   Vaishya
   Shudra
Four “stages” of life
   Brahmacarya
   Grihastha
   Vanaprastha
   Samnyasa
Yoga – “disciplined meditation”
Three kinds of Yoga in the Bhagavad Gita
   Jnana-yoga – Yoga of knowledge
   Karma-yoga – Yoga of action
   Bhakti-yoga – Yoga of devotion
Trimurti – three forms of the Ultimate (Brahman): Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva
Six “schools” of Indian philosophy
   Nyaya and Vaisheshika
   Samkhya and Yoga
   Mimamsa and Vedanta
Brahman – the Ultimate or Absolute
Atman – the “Self” within
Purusha – the “Self” as pure consciousness
Jiva – one’s ordinary identity or egoity
Prakriti – “nature,” primal materiality
Three Gunas – “strands” – thought (sattva), energy (rajas) and physical stuff (tamas)
Maya – phenomenal appearance or “illusion”: everyday conventional life
Ahimsa – non-violence
Shankara – (c. 700 CE) – chief exponent of Advaita Vedanta philosophy
Ramanuja – (c. 1137 CE) – chief exponent of Vishishtadvaita Vedanta
Buddha – the awakened one, the enlightened one
Shakyamuni – the monk of the Shakya clan
Siddhartha – the one who has achieved his goal
Gotama or Gautama – the clan or actual family name of the founder of Buddhist way (c. 563–483 BCE)
Dharma – Truth, Righteousness, Doctrine, “force factor”
Samgha – the Buddhist monastic order
Tripitaka – the “three baskets”
   Vinaya (obedience basket)
   Sutra (discourse basket)
   Abhidharma (scholastic basket)
Five Skandhas – “heaps” or “piles”
   Rupa – forms
   Vedana – feelings
   Samjna – conceptions
   Samskaras – predispositions
   Vijnana – general awareness
Three marks of existence: Duhkha (suffering), Anitya (transience), Anatman (no-self)
Four Noble Truths
   Suffering (Duhkha)
   Suffering has a cause
   Suffering can be stopped
   Suffering can be stopped by following the eightfold path
Eightfold path:
   Right views, intentions, speech, action, livelihood, effort, mindfulness, concentration
Three turnings of the Wheel of the Law:
   Theravada
   Mahayana
   Vajrayana

Jina – “conqueror” or spiritual virtuoso
Tirthankara – “stream-cresser” or “ford-cresser”
Ahimsa – non-violence
Mahavira – founder of the historic Jain tradition – same time as Gotama the Buddha
Angas and Agamas – sacred texts of the Jains
Shvetambaras – the “white” clad
Digambaras – the “sky” clad or naked Jain ascetics