

# Glossary

Ādityas	deities descended from Aditi
apsarases	semi-divine female beings
avatāras	the physical manifestations of a deity in this world
cāraṇas	a class of heavenly singers
Daityas	demons descended from Diti
Dānavas	demons descended from Danu
gandharvas	semi-divine male beings
guh yakas	demons, similar to rākṣasas
<i>guṇas</i>	the three constituent qualities of the universe
kiṃnaras	a class of semi-divine beings
kimpuruṣas	a class of semi-divine beings
kṣatriyas	the community of warriors
kūṣmāṇḍas	a class of demons
<i>mahat</i>	the fundamental element, 'greatness'
Manus	legendary rulers of the world
Maruts	wind gods
nāgas	semi-divine serpents
piśācas	flesh-eating demons
Pramathas	a class of demons in the service of Śiva
rākṣasas	night-ranging demons

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saṃsāra	the cycle of life, death and rebirth
siddhas	highly accomplished seers with semi-divine powers
<i>śrāddha</i>	a ritual to sustain deceased relatives in the afterlife
śūdras	the community of servants
<i>svayaṃvara</i>	a tournament of warriors at which a noblewoman chooses a husband
vaiśyas	the community of merchants and farmers
Vasus	a class of deities
vidyādhara	a class of semi-divine musicians
Viśvas	a class of deities
yakṣas	a class of semi-divine beings

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