

= Devi Upanishad =

The Devi Upanishad (Sanskrit : देवी उपनिषद्) , is one of the minor Upanishads of Hinduism and a text composed in Sanskrit . It is one of the 19 Upanishads attached to the Atharvaveda , and is classified as one of the eight Shakta Upanishads . It is , as an Upanishad , a part of the corpus of Vedanta literature collection that present the philosophical concepts of Hinduism .

The text was likely composed between 9th- to 14th @-@ centuries CE . It refers to Mahadevi as representing all goddesses . The Devi Upanishad is part of the five Atharvashiras Upanishads important to Tantra and Shakta philosophy traditions .

The Upanishad states that the Goddess is the Brahman (ultimate metaphysical Reality) , and from her arise Prakṛti (matter) and Purusha (consciousness) . She is bliss and non @-@ bliss , the Vedas and what is different from it , the born and the unborn , and all of the universe .

= = Etymology = =

Devi and Deva are Sanskrit terms found in the Vedic literature , such as the Rigveda of the 2nd millennium BCE . Deva is masculine , and the related feminine equivalent is Devi . They mean " heavenly , divine , terrestrial things of high excellence , exalted , shining ones " . Etymologically , the cognates of Devi are Latin dea and Greek thea .

The term Upanishad means it is knowledge or " hidden doctrine " text that belongs to the corpus of Vedanta literature collection presenting the philosophical concepts of Hinduism and considered the highest purpose of its scripture , the Vedas .

= = History = =

According to Cheever Mackenzie Brown ? a professor of Religion at the Trinity University , this important Tantric and Shaktism text was probably composed sometime between the ninth and fourteenth centuries CE .

The Devi Upanishad is part of the five Atharva Shiras Upanishads , each of which are named after the five main deities or shrines (panchayatanan) of Ganapati , Narayana , Rudra , Surya and Devi . Its philosophy is also found in the Tripura Upanishad , Bahvricha Upanishad , and the Guhyakala Upanishad .

Composed in Sanskrit , it is a minor Upanishad . The text is listed at 81 in the modern era anthology of 108 Upanishads found in the Muktika enumerated by Rama to Hanuman . Some manuscripts of this Upanishad are titled as the Devyupanishad (देव्युपनिषद्) .

= = Foundation and structure = =

The Devi Upanishad comprises 32 verses after an invocation from the Atharvaveda . The text describes the goddess as the highest principle , and the ultimate truth in the universe (Brahman) .

The foundational premises of reverence for the feminine , as stated in the Devi Upanishad , are present in the Rigveda , in the following hymn ,

The Devi Upanishad , in a manner similar to this Rigvedic hymn , asserts that from the Goddess arise Prakṛti (matter) and Purusha (consciousness) , she is bliss and non @-@ bliss , from her emerged the Vedas and what is different from it , the born and the unborn , and all of the universe . She suggests that " Brahman and non @-@ Brahman must be known " , that she is all the five elements , as well as all that is different from these elements , what is above , what is below , what is around , and thus the universe in its entirety . She , states the text , is the creative power of Shiva . It refers to Mahadevi or " supreme goddess " , as representing all goddesses .

= = Contents = =

= = = Who is the Goddess ? = = =

The Devi Upanishad opens with a gathering of gods , who ask , " Great Goddess , who are you ? "

The Devi asserts that she is Svarupini ? identical in form to ? Brahman . In verses 2 and 3 , states Thomas B. Coburn , Devi explains her forms of nirguna (without attributes) and suguna (with attributes) , the true being (Sat) , the consciousness (Citta) and the bliss (Anand) .

The verses 2 and 3 further assert that she is the universe , the Prakrti (nature) and Purusha (consciousness) , the knowledge and ignorance , Brahman and Non @-@ Brahman , the Vedas and whatever is different from it , " the unborn and the born , I am below , above and around " .

In verses 4 and 5 , the Devi Upanishad mirrors the opening verses of the Devi sukta hymn of the Rigveda .

The first five verses of the Devi Upanishad resonate with ideas from the Mahanarayana Upanishad and the Shvetashvatara Upanishad . There , states June McDaniel ? a Professor of Religious Studies , the ideas of metaphysical reality called Brahman is in " everything below , around and above is her own personification " .

After suggesting in the first six verses that she is identical with Mahadevi , Durga , Kali , Mahalakshmi , Vaishnavi , Saraswati and all goddesses , Devi asserts that it is she to whom the oblations of any Yajna (fire rituals) reach . In verse 7 , with a hymn structure resonating with the Gayatri Mantra , the Devi states , that one who knows " my essence in the water of the inner sea " , attains her .

= = = Devi stuti and iconography = = =

In verses 8 through 14 , the gathered gods acknowledge Devi 's answer . They accept , states Devi Upanishad , that she is the Shakti , the Maha @-@ vidya (the great knowledge) , the Vedas , the power of Vishnu , she is the inspirer , she is the reason that gods were born , she is the love in the universe , the primordial source of universe , the bearer of thunderbolt , the cave , the wind , the cloud , the enchanting , the power of Self . This part of the Upanishad is the same as the Devi Stuti in Devi Gita 1 @.@ 44 ? 1 @.@ 48 .

In verse 15 , in an iconographic description of the Great Goddess , the text states Devi carries a noose , a goad , a bow and arrow , and enchants all .

According to verse 18 , she is venerated because Devi is eight attendant deities of Indra (" Vasus ") ; the eleven Rudras ; and the twelve Adityas or sun gods representing each month of a year . She represents all gods who consume the Vedic ritual drink Soma or those who choose not to . She is also all the goblins , the demons , the evil beings , the ghosts , the super @-@ human and the semi @-@ divine , the planets , stars and all that shines in the sky , she is time and its divisions , she is everything that was , is and will be in the universe .

She is , states the text , the three Gu?as ? Sattva , Rajas and Tamas . She is Prajapati , Indra and Manu . She is infinite , pure , Shiva , refuge and the giver of that which is good , states verse 19 .

In another iconic description , in verses 20 and 24 , the texts says that she is seated in one 's " lotus heart " , adorned with a crescent moon , conjoined with fire , glowing like the early morning sun , propitious , armed with the " noose and goad " , with expressions marking her benevolence and dissolving fears , and that she is three eyed , attired in red , tender , bestows all wishes to her devotees .

= = = Epilogue = = =

The Upanishad , in verses 26 to 28 , asserts that Devi is " Unknowable , the Endless , the Incomprehensible , the Unknown , the One and the Many . " The Upanishad states that Devi is the fountainhead of all mantras . All knowledge is her inherent characteristic , beyond her there is nothing , she is the pilot of worldly life .

In verses 29 to 32 , the benefits of reciting this Upanishad , at specific times and days are explained . Reciting the Upanishad ten times removes all sins and obstacles ; also prescribes recitation in the

morning and evening hours to get the same benefits . Recitation at midnight makes one 's speech perfect . Recitation during the consecration of an image of a deity imbibes the image with energy .

= = Influence in Tantra = =

The tantric aspect in this Upanishad , says McDaniel , is in the usage of the terms yantra , bindu , bija , mantra , shakti and chakra .

The five verses from 8 to 12 form part of the Devi Stuti (in Devi Gita 1 @. @ 44 ? 48) . This reflects the Vedicization of tantric nature of the Devi Upanishad , a fusion , which the author of the Devi Gita says " as one of those texts whose recitation is pleasing to her . " Her progeny through Shiva like Aditi and Skanda , her comradeship with goddesses like Saraswati and Lakshmi , her status as Maya (the empirical reality) and her representation of the wind , the cloud and Indra are all recalled in verses 8 to 14 .