

The Netra Tantra

The consonant Ka, of all the letters of the alphabet, is the form of Mulaprakriti. Therefore, by every effort, one should worship the letter Ka, dearest - Kamadhenutantra XVII

The *Netra Tantra* is attributed to the school of Kashmir Shaivism and is usually printed with a commentary by Kshemaraja. Here is chapter one, translated for the first time into English. Chapter Ten of this tantra, also translated, can be viewed [here](#).

The work, divided into 22 adhikaras of uneven length, centres around [Mrityunjaya](#), here described as Amritesha, and his cluster of shaktis. Chapter one is below. In chapter two, there is discussion of the three shaktis Iccha, Jnana and Kriya. Chapter three is concerned with the puja (yaga) of Mrityunjaya, while chapter five discusses initiation (diksha).

In chapter six, the rules of abhisheka are given, while chapter seven deals with Amritesha, or Shiva as god of amrita or nectar. This has gross, subtle and supreme meanings, the text says.

Chapter seven is interesting because it is close in nature to the [Siddhasiddhantapadhati](#), enumerating the six chakras, the sixteen adharas, the three lakshyas and the five vyomas (aethers), as well as the granthis and the nadis within the body.

Chapter eight deals with yoga of the tantras, while chapter nine begins to discuss the different tantrik divisions known as vama, dakshina, siddhanta, Saura and Vaishnava, and how they relate to the Vedas. Amritesha, says Bhairava in the text, is pure, like crystal and extends everywhere, giving the fruit of all agamas (sacred texts). The chapter gives different meditation images of Shiva. Chapter ten is translated elsewhere on this site.

Chapter eleven, devoted to the Uttaramnaya, starts with a dhyana of Tumburu, who is of the colour of dazzling white snow, or the kunda flower. Shaktis mentioned in this chapter include Jambhani, Mohani, Subhaga and Durbhaga. Chapter twelve concerns the Kulamnaya, and outlines the mandala of Bhairava and different shaktis and worship conducted there. More meditation images are contained in chapter thirteen, which also contains a rare dhyana of Brahma. This teaching is open to all, be they female, male and of whatever caste and hue. Brahma is described as having four arms, handsome, red in colour, effulgent, seated on Hamsa (a swan, but here meaning the mantra). He holds a staff, a rosary of akshas, a jewelled water pot and the four vedas.

In chapter fourteen, the role of this mantra and Iccha, Jnana and Kriya Shaktis are discussed, and the supremacy of the mantra. Chapter fifteen describes how Amritesha's mantra is all protective, while the next chapter describes different siddhis obtained from the worship. That topic is continued in chapter seventeen, which also covers the kavacha.

Chapter eighteen is devoted to Amriteshvari, or the shakti of Amrita, as well as describing the purifications that mantras must receive to become successful. Chapter nineteen is long, with 226 shlokas (verses). It starts with the Devi asking Shiva to describe afflictions caused by bhutas, pretas, yakshas, pishachas, rakshas and the like, and how they can be prevented. Chapter twenty deals with the yoginis, such as Shakini and others of the bodily dhatus. Chapter twenty one discusses the nature of mantra, while the last chapter concludes with the great merit of Amritesha (Mrityunjaya's) mantra.

Chapter One

Hail to the ordainer of destiny, the being who manifests three ways in the three worlds, the possessor of Shakti who creates, maintains and destroys in the cosmos, the being whose nature is amrita, Shiva, the supreme essence of Brahma, Vishnu and Isha.

Seated on Kailasha Peak is the god of gods, Maheshvara, Hara, the altar of dalliance, with his hosts and his spouse Parvati.

Having seen the happy god, and with the desire of benefiting living beings, suddenly Parvati left his side, and grasping his feet, questioned the contented Parameshvara in a very devoted way.

Shri Devi said: Lord god of gods, Lokanatha, lord of the cosmos, you have accomplished a great miracle, a cause of astonishment. You are god of all that exists, but my supreme master.

This secret, hard to distinguish and difficult to accomplish, is unknown to Kartikeya, to me, to the gods or to the ganas. It is certainly unknown to lords of yoga, to the Matrikas, to the rishis and to the yogis.

Lord of creation, speak now of this, if you are kindly disposed towards me! O Lord, I entreat you by your obligation to speak fully.

Thus having heard the words of Devi, the one with the smiling face spoke: Ask anything you wish, O one with beautiful hips. The secret is in your heart. I will certainly speak fully. You please me, O pure one!

Devi said: Bhagavan, lord god of gods, cause of various miracles, beautiful one of miraculous appearance, I wish to hear of that not already revealed. Handsome lord, I want to hear about the cause of the utmost bliss, to be related to me by you.

The all-seeing eye is made of water, Deva. How, then, may it become fiery and wrathful, flaming and burning up time? Saturn was reduced to ashes by the power of this eye. Deva, how is such wrath produced, that fire which desires to burn time? It consumes all creation, destroying Brahma and all that is permanent.

In a similar way, Parameshvara, Kama was burned up by its play. What is this cruel, fiery eye, O Natha, which is always invisible yet is the cause of great miracles? How does fire come to be within this eye? Who does it see? How may an eye be made of fire? Why is it invisible? O cosmic lord, how comes it that this eye, the essence of immortality, augmenting the whole cosmos, has given birth to the cosmos?

Deva, these graceful nectar-like eyes are the cause of my bliss and behind the process of creation. How may this fire known as the fire of time come to create? Bhagavan, I want you to answer all this.

Shri Bhagavan said: I am moved by the great eagerness of your questions. Listen, dearest, I will speak of all relating to the fire and ultimate nectar which is within my eye and of its yoga.

Its real nature is without origin, pure, pervading all and omnipresent. It is within all living creatures and present in the hearts of all things, attained by yoga, difficult to accomplish, hard to attain for all beings.

It is like my own semen, self-knowledge, my supreme part. It is the essence of all semen, the strongest of the strong. Certainly, and without any doubt, it is the quintessence of all ojas, eternity itself.

From me came she known as supreme Iccha Shakti, one with Shakti, born from my own nature. Just as fire and heat and the sun and its rays are inseparable, so also Shakti herself, the cause of creation, is inseparable from the cosmos.

Within her is that which is both manifest and unmanifest. She is all-knowing, with all qualities, manifested as Iccha, Jnana and Kriya and so forth, and in her, knowledge, the six qualities and everything else are situated. All light dwells in her.

She is the essence of Mahakriya, the unified mother of action. She both creates and destroys and is the very self of Anima and the rest of the eight siddhis. Thus, these three Shaktis of mine are called Iccha, Jnana and Kriya, it is said. In me dwell the three playful abodes of Sun, Moon and Fire. In the play of my magnificent three eyes is the substance of these three. I create, sustain and destroy the universe.

I am the dwelling place of the three bodies and of creation, maintenance and dissolution. My effulgent and life-giving semen pervades all. With my forms of Iccha, Jnana and Kriya I am the ultimate eye nectar.

This semen is the supreme realm, the highest form of nectar, supreme bliss, the quintessence, complete knowledge, pure, the core of the three eyes. This is called the Mrityunjaya (conqueror of death) and gives success to all. He (Mrityunjaya Shiva) is the giver of success, the supreme divinity, liberating from all sorrows, the god destroying all ailments, removing all delusions, Shiva, the alleviator of poverty, eternal, conqueror of death, permeating all, infallible, without stain, peaceful, all-giving, all-liberating.

His brightness is equal to 1,000 million suns and 1,000 million fires, liberating from the sixteen kalas, effulgence itself, unassailable by gods or demons. With my fiery eye I burn everything in an instant and I may also create and maintain. There is nothing greater than this certain semen- like thing seen everywhere, the essence of vajra, taking one to the state of Rudra, like a renowned sword which is death to all enemies and stops all elementals, weapons and arms.

This one semen becomes multifold, diffusing itself limitelessly with many variations. The magnificence of this great Pashupata is that it is like Vishnu's discus or Brahma's staff and is the very essence of all weapons. Appearing in various forms, this weapon spreads in many ways. My semen creates the different gods themselves.

I, the lord of yoga, through my own Shakti, manifested the entire cosmos. She is the supreme protectress from fears and anxieties, allaying fear, destroying enemies and the supreme giver of liberation, most certainly. O Beautiful One, even great poetry could not describe the greatness of this!

This great thing, the giver of grace, the most excellent boon giver, causes manifestation, maintenance and the great intensity of Rudra. It should be regarded as immeasurable, knowledge itself, the great power of mantra, the protector of all the elements. Very hidden, you should always conceal it. Devi, it has now been revealed to you. What else do you wish to ask?