

त्रिपुरसुन्दरीअष्टकम्

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Octad to tripurasundarii

by shriimad.h sha.nkaraachaarya

Introduction¹

Before we begin, let us offer ourselves at the feet of the Divine Mother, mahaatripurasundarii, who as Ishvara rules the world but is none other than the indwelling spirit (Atman) within us and which pervades us all that exists.

This introduction deals with the background on the name of tripurasundarii. It is one of the best epithets to describe the Devi meaning that she is the belle of all the three worlds. The word tripura can be interpreted variously. The kaalika purANa says that by the will of pradhaana, the body of Lord Shiva became triple : the upper part became Brahma, the middle part became VishhNu and the lower part became Rudra. As these three pura-s (bodies) are in Lord Shiva, he is called Tripura (three bodied) and his wife is known as tripuraa. In the kaamakalaa vilaasa (13,14), the honored sage, abhiyukta, mentions that Devi created all the three forms and she is before all (purobhava), because she is in the form of all the three (trayiimayi) and exists even after the dissolution of the three worlds and recreates them again. In the brahmANDa-purANa, it is mentioned that the Goddess tripurasundarii rules over the entire universe and She is the supreme empress, and Brahma, VishhNu and Shiva are mere functionaries in her empire. The Lalitaa Sahasranaama portrays Her as being attended by Lakshmi and Saraswati on either side. Shankaracharya, in his saundrayalahirii, mentions that Brahma, VishhNu and Shiva started their cosmic processes when the Supreme Shakti knitted Her brow for a split second.

The Devi mantra consists of three syllables, and her fifteen lettered mantra panchadashaakshari

¹The transliteration of Sanskrit terms is according to ITRANS scheme, which is close to the pronunciation. The translation and commentary on this text can be found in <http://www.geocities.com/RodeoDrive/1415/tripura8.itx> Please direct all your suggestions and corrections to mgridhar@ucdavis.edu.

is composed of three kuuTa-s (peaks). She resides in three naaDi-s (nerve channels), namely sushhumnaa, pingalaa, and iDaa. She is the ruler of the three Shaktis - ichchaa (will), kriyaa (action), and GYAna (knowledge). She pervades all the three worlds - heaven, earth and the nether world. She is the controller of all the three bodies - sthUla (gross), suukshhma (subtle), and kaaraNa (causal). She is the self which is present through the three states of existence - jaagrat (waking), svapna (dream), and sushhupti (deep sleep). Though she is above all guNa-s, She pervades the three modes of energy-sattva (purity), rajas (mobility) and tamas (inertia).

Love and joy are the inherent qualities of beauty. Sundarii means belle and beauty. Shankaracharya, while explaining Chandogya upanishhad 7, 31:1, mentions that all longing and desire is a source of pain, and in what is finite there is no bliss. He mentions that the Infinite alone can produce bliss. When bliss takes on a form, it is sundarii: sarvaa.nga sundarii (lalitaa trishati, verse 130) and Shankara comments on this name of the Devi as the one who possesses all the marks of beauty and has all the qualities of perfection and is thus the source of Bliss. The translation and commentary on this text can be found in <http://www.geocities.com/RodeoDrive/1415/tripura8.itx>

May the Divine Mother guide us in our every action and thought, and may She confer upon us the greatest gift of all, moksha (liberation) by removing the veil of maya which She weaves.

At Her feet, AUM tat.h sat.h

त्रिपुरसुन्दरीअष्टकम् ²

कदम्बवनचारिणीं मुनिकदम्बकादम्बिनीं
नितम्बजित भूधरां सुरनितम्बिनीसेविताम् ।
नवाम्बुरुहलोचनामभिनवाम्बुदश्यामलां
त्रिलोचनकुटुम्बिनीं त्रिपुरसुन्दरीमाश्रये ॥ १ ॥
कदम्बवनवासिनीं कनकवल्लकीधारिणीं
महार्हमणिहारिणीं मुखसमुल्लसद्धारुणीम् ।
दयाविभवकारिणीं विशदलोचनीं चारिणीं
त्रिलोचनकुटुम्बिनीं त्रिपुरसुन्दरीमाश्रये ॥ २ ॥
कदम्बवनशालया कुचभरोल्लसन्मालया
कुचोपमितशैलया गुरुकृपालसेद्वलया ।
मदारुणकपोलया मधुरगीतवाचालया
कयाऽपि घननीलया कवचिता वयं लीलया ॥ ३ ॥
कदम्बवनमध्यगां कनकमण्डलोपस्थितां
षडम्बुरुहवासिनीं सततसिद्धसौदामिनीम् ।
विडम्बितजपारुचिं विकचचन्द्रचूडामणिं
त्रिलोचनकुटुम्बिनीं त्रिपुरसुन्दरीमाश्रये ॥ ४ ॥
कुचाञ्चितविपञ्चिकां कुटिलकुन्तलालंकृतां
कुशेशयनिवासिनीं कुटिलचित्तविद्वेषिणीम् ।
मदारुणविलोचनां मनसिजारिसंमोहिनीं
मतङ्गमुनिकन्यकां मधुरभाषिणीमाश्रये ॥ ५ ॥
स्मरप्रथमपुष्पिणीं रुधिरबिन्दुनीलाम्बरां
गृहीतमधुपात्रिकां मदविघूर्णनेत्राञ्चलां ।
घनस्तनभरोन्नतां गलितचूलिकां श्यामलां
त्रिलोचनकुटुम्बिनीं त्रिपुरसुन्दरीमाश्रये ॥ ६ ॥
सकुङ्कुमविलेपनामलकचुम्बिकस्तूरिकां
समन्दहसितेक्षणां सशरचापपाशाङ्कुशाम् ।
अशेषजनमोहिनीमरुणमाल्य भूषाम्बरां
जपाकुसुमभासुरां जपविधौ स्मराम्यम्बिकाम् ॥ ७ ॥
पुरंदरपुरंध्रिकां चिकुरबन्धसैरंध्रिकां
पितामहपतिव्रतां पटपटीरचर्चरताम् ।
मुकुन्दरमणीमणीलसदलक्रियाकारिणीं
भजामि भुवनांबिकां सुरवधूटिकाचेटिकाम् ॥ ८ ॥

॥ इति श्रीमद् शंकराचार्यविरचितं
त्रिपुरसुन्दरीअष्टकं समाप्तं ॥

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