
Tripurasundari Ashtakam

त्रिपुरसुन्दर्यष्टकम्

Document Information

Text title : tripurasundari aShTakaM A Hymn of worship to Goddess Tripurasundari

File name : tripurasund8.itx

Category : aShTaka, devii, dashamahAvidyA, devI, shankarAchArya

Location : doc_devii

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Latest update : November 1, 2010

Send corrections to : sanskrit at cheerful dot c om

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November 6, 2023

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Octad to tripurasundarI

by shrImad sha.nkarAchArya

Introduction

Before we begin, let us offer ourselves at the feet of the Divine Mother, mahAtripurasundarI, 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 tripurasundarI. 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 kAlIkA purANa says that by the will of pradhAna, the body of Lord Shiva became triple : the upper part became Brahma, the middle part became ViShNu 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 tripurA. In the kAmakalA vilAsa (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 (trayImayi) and exists even after the dissolution of the three worlds and recreates them again. In the brahmANDa-purANa, it is mentioned that the Goddess tripurasundarI rules over the entire universe and She is the supreme empress, and Brahma, ViShNu and Shiva are mere functionaries in her empire. The LalitA SahasranAma portrays Her as being attended by LakShmi and Saraswati on either side. Shankaracharya, in his saundrayalahirI, mentions that Brahma, ViShNu 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 panchadashAkShari is composed of three kUTa-s (peaks). She resides in three nADi-s (nerve channels), namely suShumnA, pingalA, and iDA. She is the ruler of the three Shaktis - ichchA (will), kriyA (action), and j nAna (knowledge). She pervades all the three

worlds - heaven, earth and the nether world. She is the controller of all the three bodies - sthUla (gross), sUkShhma (subtle), and kAraNa (causal). She is the self which is present through the three states of existence - jAgrat (waking), svapna (dream), and suShupti (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. SundarI means belle and beauty. Shankaracharya, while explaining Chandogya upaniShad 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 sundarI: sarvA.nga sundarI (lalitA 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.

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, OM tatsat .

अथ त्रिपुरसुन्दरी अष्टकम् ।
 कदम्बवनधारिणीं मुनिकदम्बकादम्बिनीं
 नितम्बजित भूधरां सुरनितम्बिनीसेविताम् ।
 नवाम्बुरुडलोचनामभिनवाम्बुदश्यामलां
 त्रिलोचनकुटुम्बिनीं त्रिपुरसुन्दरीमाश्रये ॥ १ ॥

कदम्बवनवासिनीं कनकवल्कलीधारिणीं
 मङ्गलमण्डिहारिणीं मुभसमुल्लसद्धारुणीम् ।
 द्याविभवधारिणीं विशदलोचनीं चारिणीं
 त्रिलोचनकुटुम्बिनीं त्रिपुरसुन्दरीमाश्रये ॥ २ ॥

कदम्बवनशालया कुयभरोल्लसन्मालया
 कुथोपमितशैलया गुरुकृपालसद्वेलया ।
 मदारुणकपोलया मधुरगीतवाचालया
 कयाऽपि धननीलया कवचिता वयं वीलयाम् ॥ ३ ॥

कदम्बवनमध्यगां कनकमण्डलोपस्थितां
 षडम्बुरुडवासिनीं सततसिद्धसौदामिनीम् ।

विऽम्बितजपारुचिं विकचयंद्र्यूडामणिं
त्रिलोचनकुटुम्बिनीं त्रिपुरसुन्दरीमाश्रये ॥ ४ ॥

कुयाञ्चितविपञ्चिकां कुटिलकुन्तलालंकृतां
कुशेशयनिवासिनीं कुटिलयित्तविद्वेषिणीम् ।
मदारुणविलोचनां मनसिजारिसंमोहिनीं
मतङ्गमुनिकन्यकां मधुरभाषिणीमाश्रये ॥ ५ ॥

स्मरप्रथमपुष्पिणीं रुधिरभिन्दुनीलाम्भरां
गृहीतमधुपानिकां मध्विद्युर्नैत्राञ्चलाम् ।
धनस्तनभरोन्नतां गलितयूलिकां श्यामलां
त्रिलोचनकुटुम्बिनीं त्रिपुरसुन्दरीमाश्रये ॥ ६ ॥

सकुडुमविलेपनामलकयुम्बिकस्तूरिकां
समन्दलसितेक्षणां सशर्यापपाशाङ्कुशाम् ।
अशेषजनमोहिनीमरुणामाल्य भूषाम्भरां
जपाङ्गुसुमलासुरां जपविधौ स्मराम्यम्बिकाम् ॥ ७ ॥

पुरन्दरपुरन्त्रिका चिकुरबन्धसौरंभिकां
पितामहपतिव्रता पुटपटीरय्यारताम् ।
मुकुन्दरमणीमणीलसदलङ्कियाकारिणीं
भजामि भुवनांभिकां सुरवधूटिकाचेटिकाम् ॥ ८ ॥

॥ इति श्रीमद् शङ्कराचार्यविरचितं त्रिपुरसुन्दर्यष्टकं समाप्तम् ॥

कदम्बवनवासिनी स्तोत्रम् च

Encoded and proofread Madras Giridhar

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pdf was typeset on November 6, 2023

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